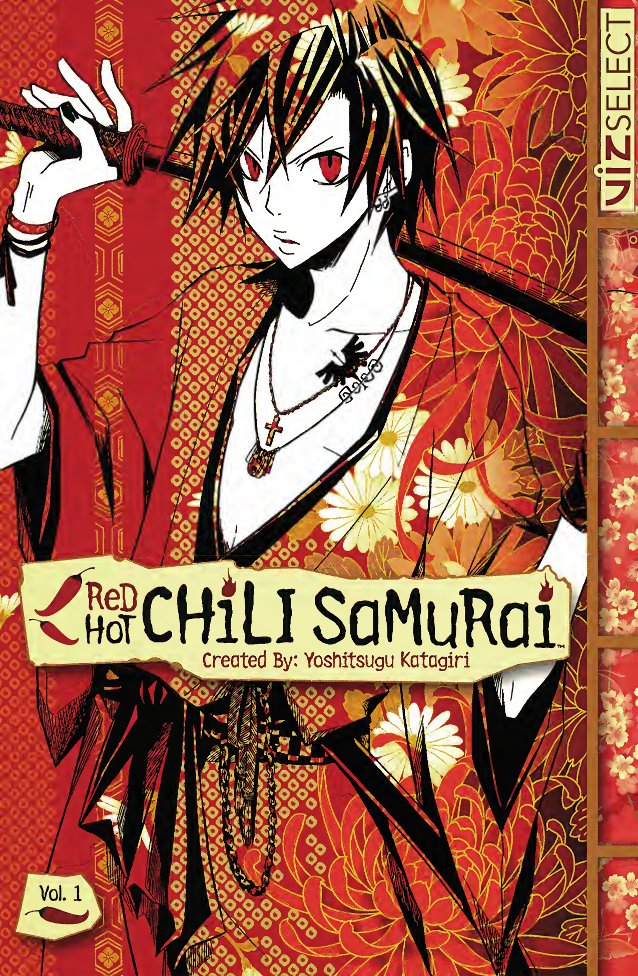

RED HOT CHILI SAMURAI™

Created By: Yoshitsugu Katagiri

Vol. 1

VIZ SELECT

RED HOT CHILI SAMURAI™

VOLUME 1

BY
YOSHITSUGU KATAGIRI

Red Hot Chili Samurai Vol. 1
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YOSHITSUGU
KATAGIRI

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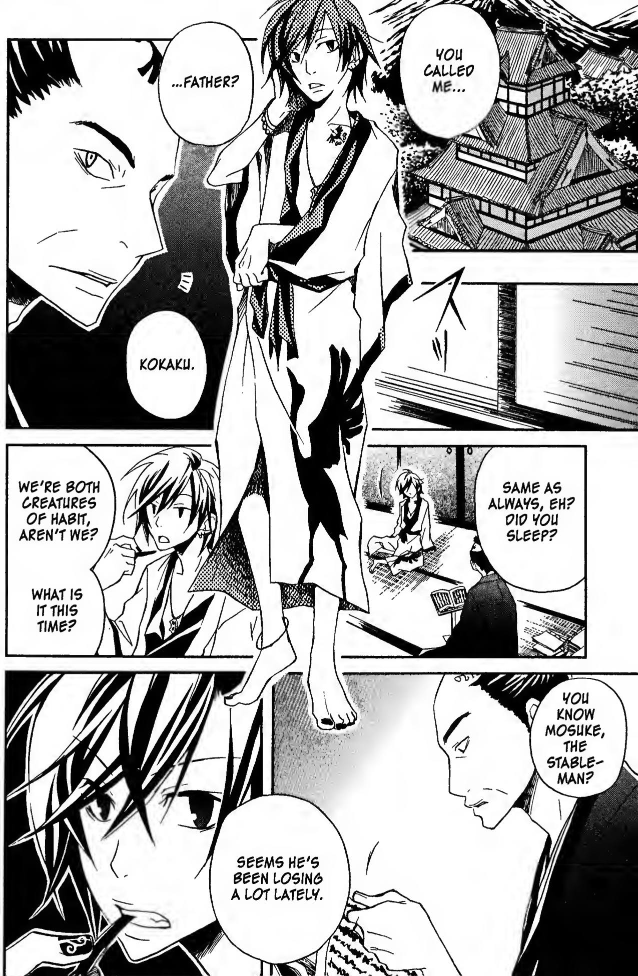
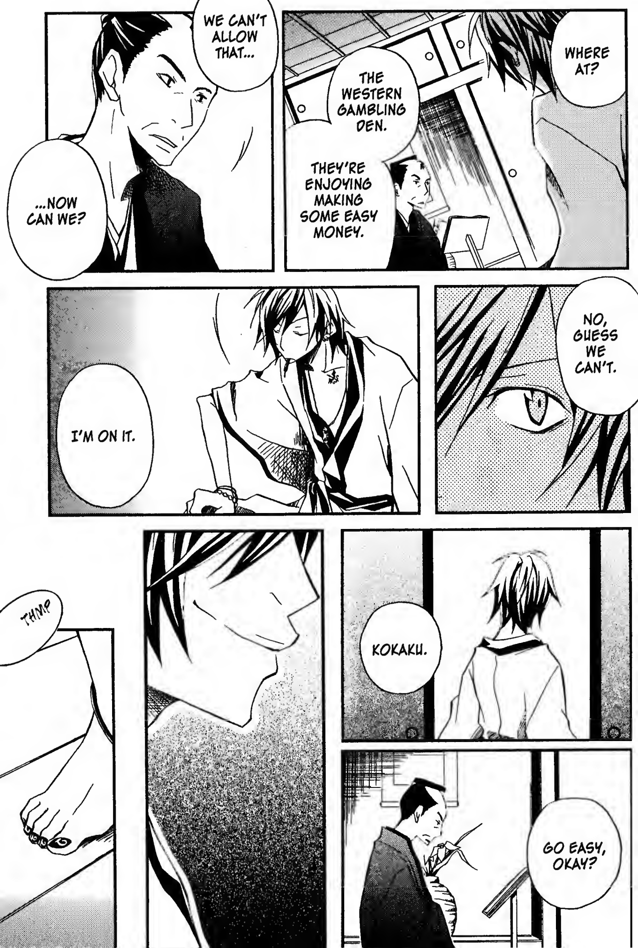
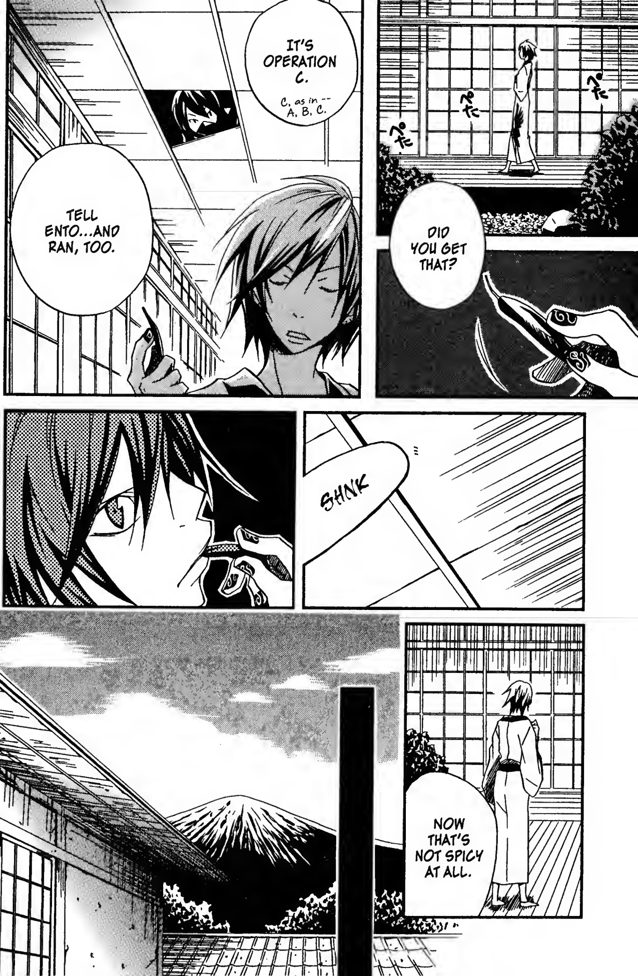
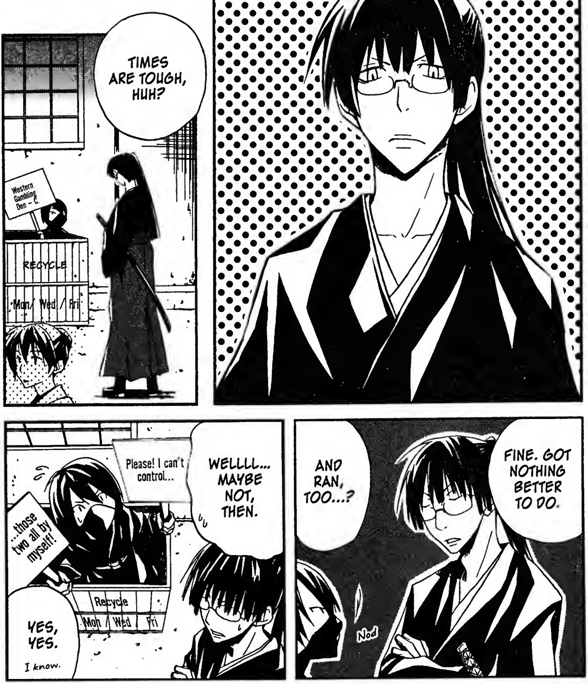
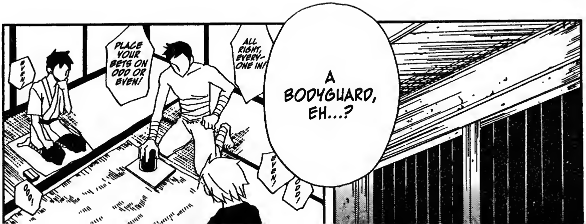
1ST SUBJECT:
THE VOLUME OF LONG LIFE

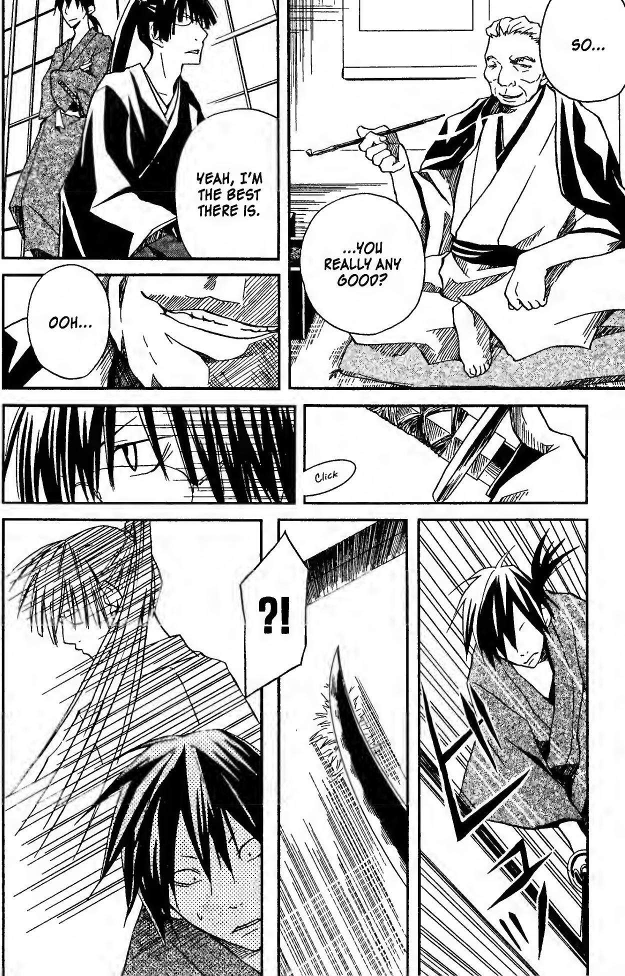

YOU CALLED ME...
...FATHER?
KOKAKU.
SAME AS ALWAYS, EH? DID YOU SLEEP?
WE'RE BOTH CREATURES OF HABIT, AREN'T WE?
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
YOU KNOW MOSUKE, THE STABLE-MAN?
SEEMS HE'S BEEN LOSING A LOT LATELY.

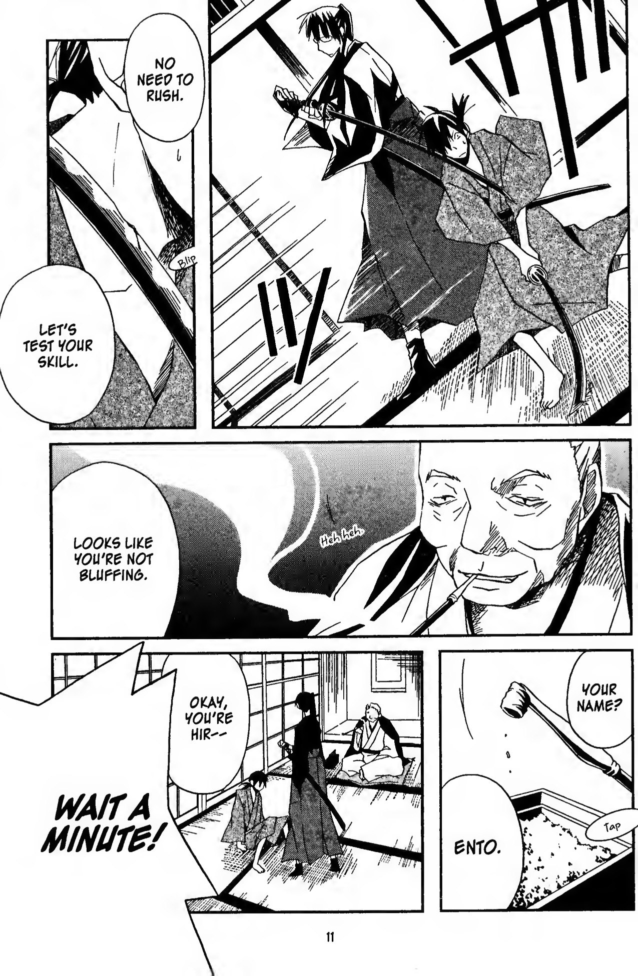

WHERE AT?
THE WESTERN GAMBLING DEN.
THEY'RE ENJOYING MAKING SOME EASY MONEY.
WE CAN'T ALLOW THAT...
...NOW CAN WE?
NO, GUESS WE CAN'T.
I'M ON IT.
KOKAKU.
GO EASY, OKAY?
THMP

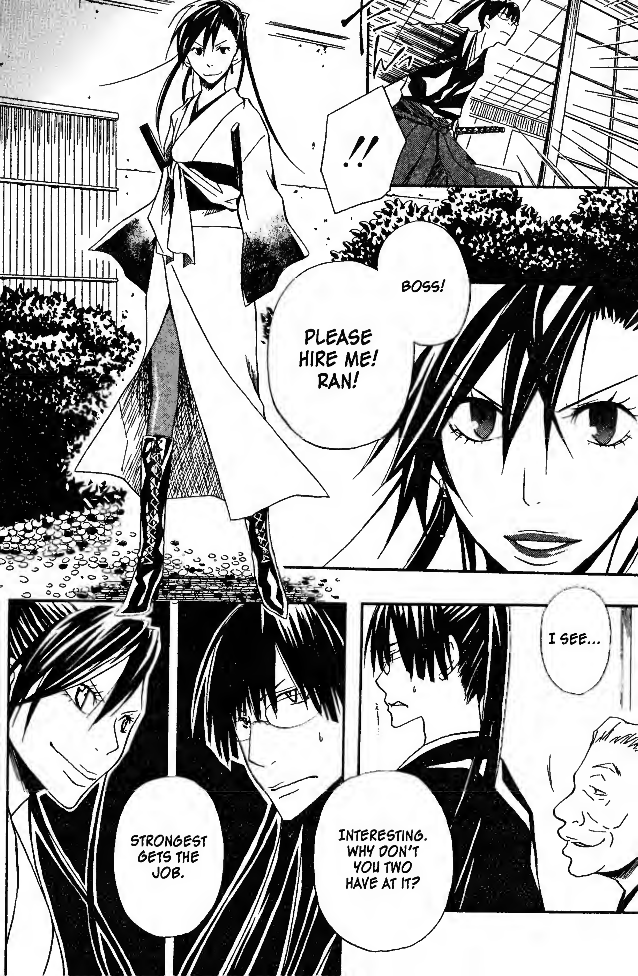

ぺた
ぺた
ぺた
IT'S OPERATION C.
C, as in -- A, B, C.
TELL ENTO...AND RAN, TOO.
DID YOU GET THAT?
SHNK
NOW THAT'S NOT SPICY AT ALL.

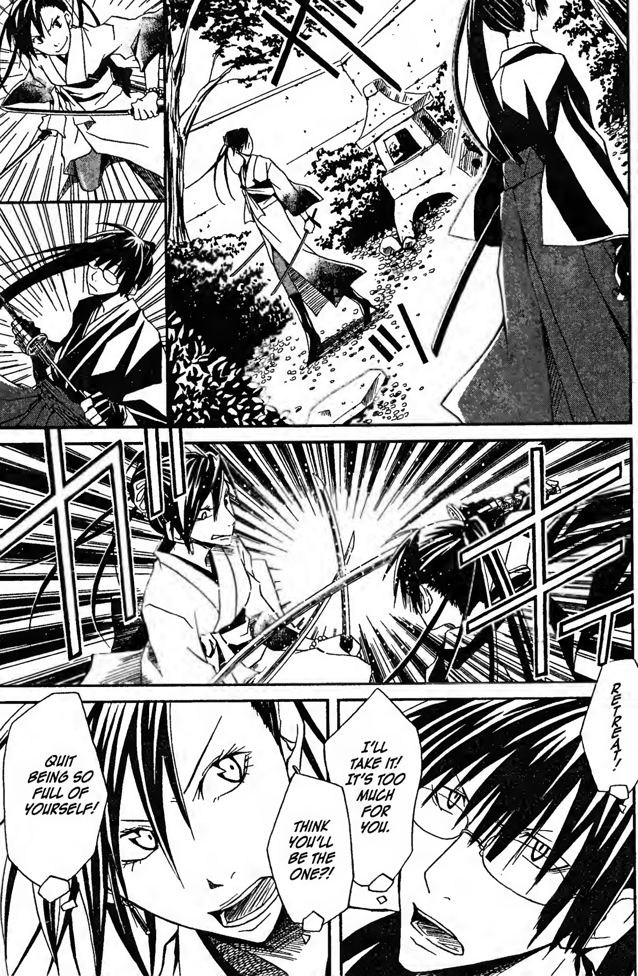

TIMES ARE TOUGH, HUH?
Western Gambling Den – C.
RECYCLE
Mon/ Wed / Fri
Please! I can't control...
...those two all by myself!
WELLLL... MAYBE NOT, THEN.
YES, YES.
I know.
Recycle
Mon / Wed / Fri
AND RAN, TOO...?
FINE. GOT NOTHING BETTER TO DO.
Nod

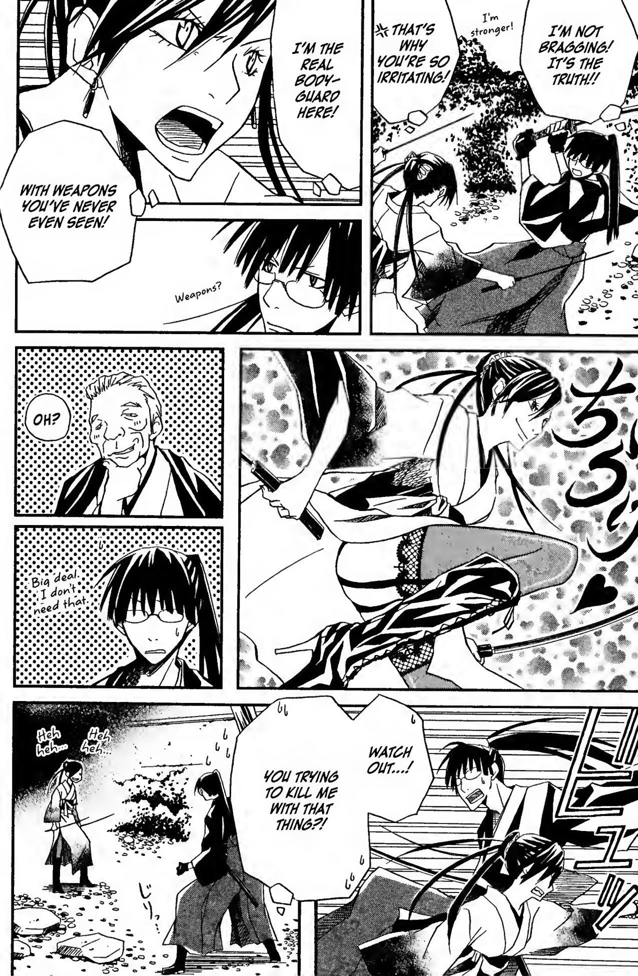

A BODYGUARD, EH...?
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE IN!
PLACE YOUR BETS ON ODD OR EVEN!
EVEN!
EVEN!
ODD!
ODD!

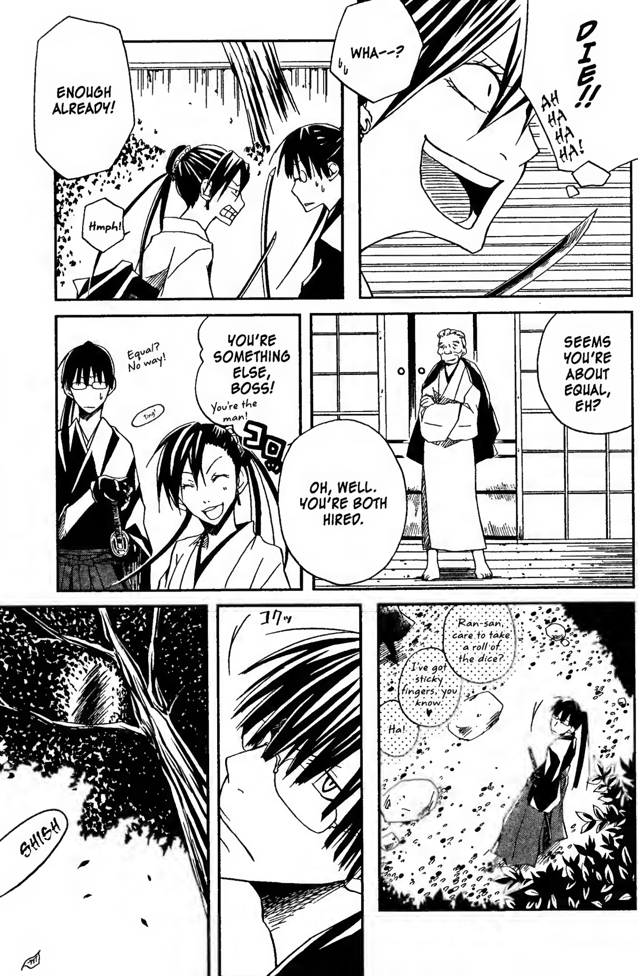

SO...
...YOU REALLY ANY GOOD?
YEAH, I'M THE BEST THERE IS.
OOH...
Click
?!

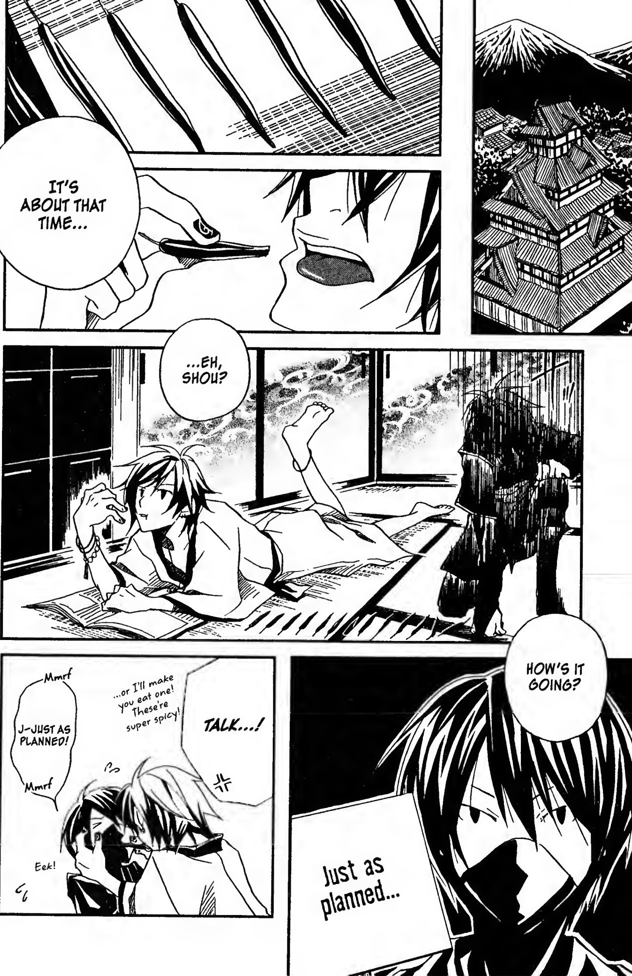

NO NEED TO RUSH.
Blip
LET'S TEST YOUR SKILL.
Heh heh
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE NOT BLUFFING.
YOUR NAME?
Tap
ENTO.
OKAY, YOU'RE HIR--
WAIT A MINUTE!

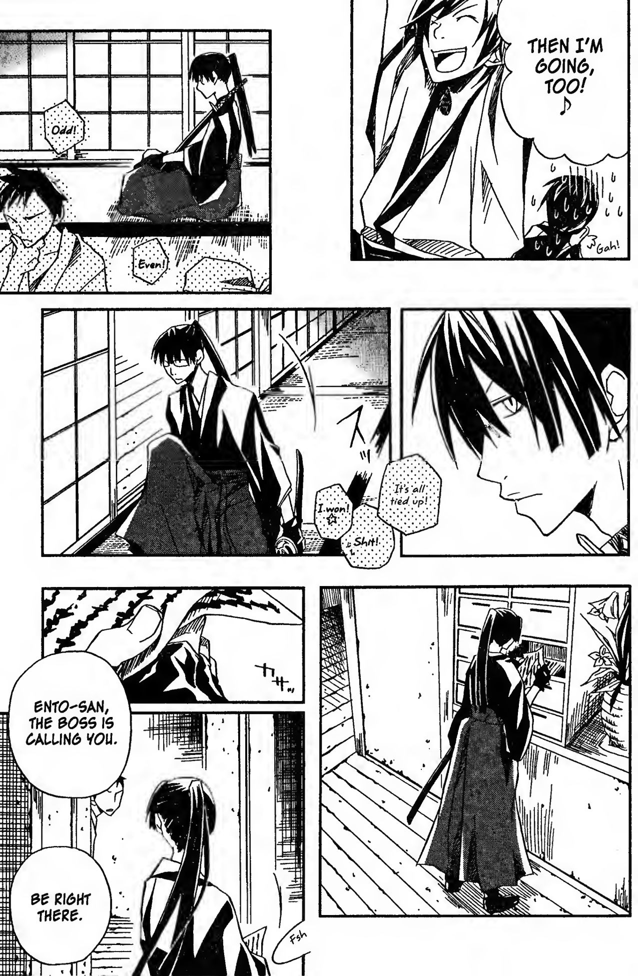

!!
BOSS!
PLEASE HIRE ME! RAN!
I SEE...
INTERESTING. WHY DON'T YOU TWO HAVE AT IT?
STRONGEST GETS THE JOB.

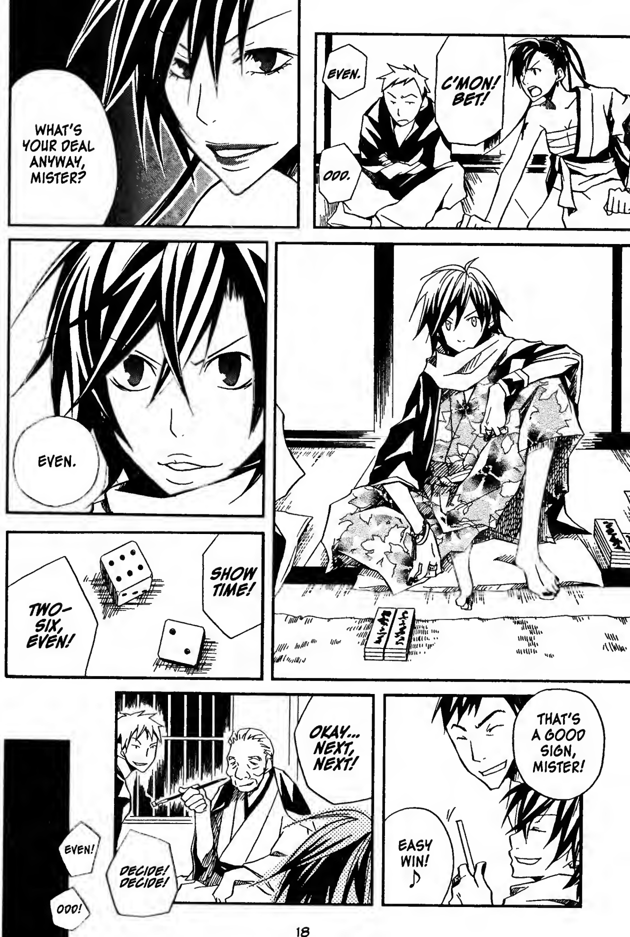

RETREAT!
I'LL TAKE IT! IT'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU.
THINK YOU'LL BE THE ONE?!
QUIT BEING SO FULL OF YOURSELF!

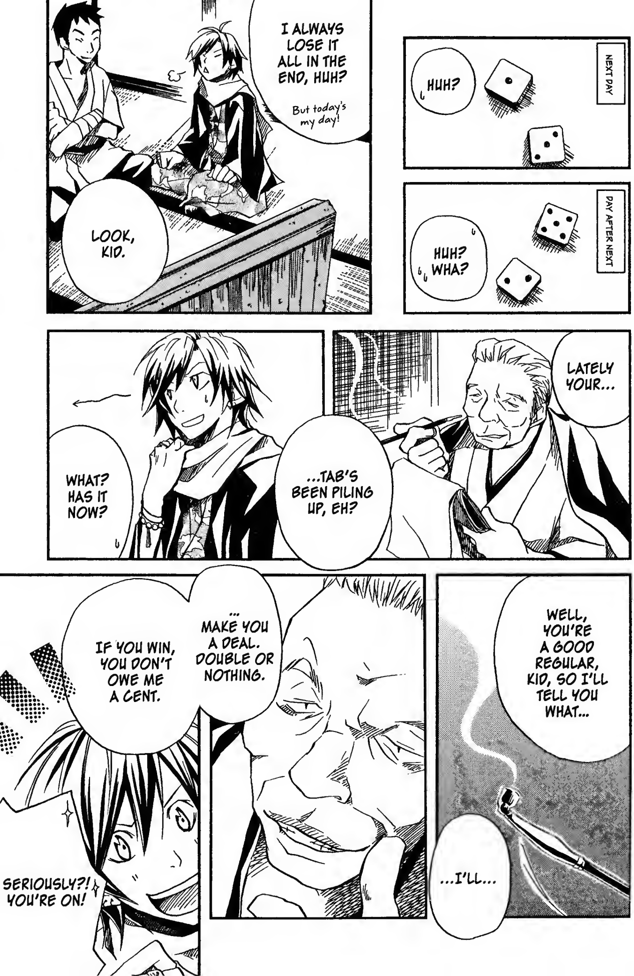

I'M NOT BRAGGING! IT'S THE TRUTH!!
I'm stronger!
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SO IRRITATING!
I'M THE REAL BODY-GUARD HERE!
WITH WEAPONS YOU'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN!
Weapons?
ちろっ
OH?
Big deal. I don't need that.
WATCH OUT...!
YOU TRYING TO KILL ME WITH THAT THING?!
Heh heh...
Heh heh...
じりっ

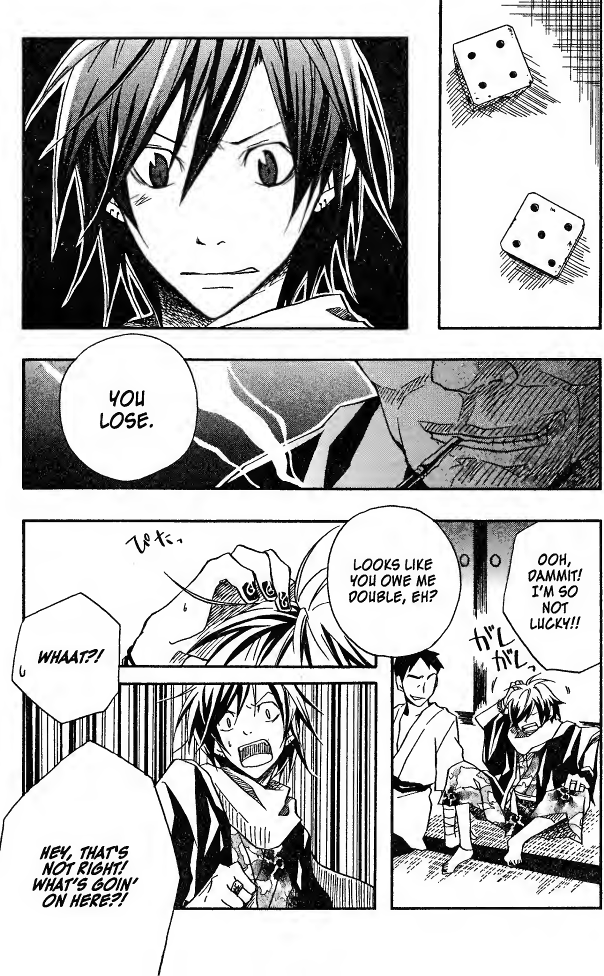

DIE!!
AH HA HA HA!
WHA--?
ENOUGH ALREADY!
Hmph!
SEEMS YOU'RE ABOUT EQUAL, EH?
OH, WELL. YOU'RE BOTH HIRED.
YOU'RE SOMETHING ELSE, BOSS!
You're the man!
Equal? No way!
Ting!
Ran-san, care to take a roll of the dice?
I've got sticky fingers, you know.
Ha!
コクッ
SHISH

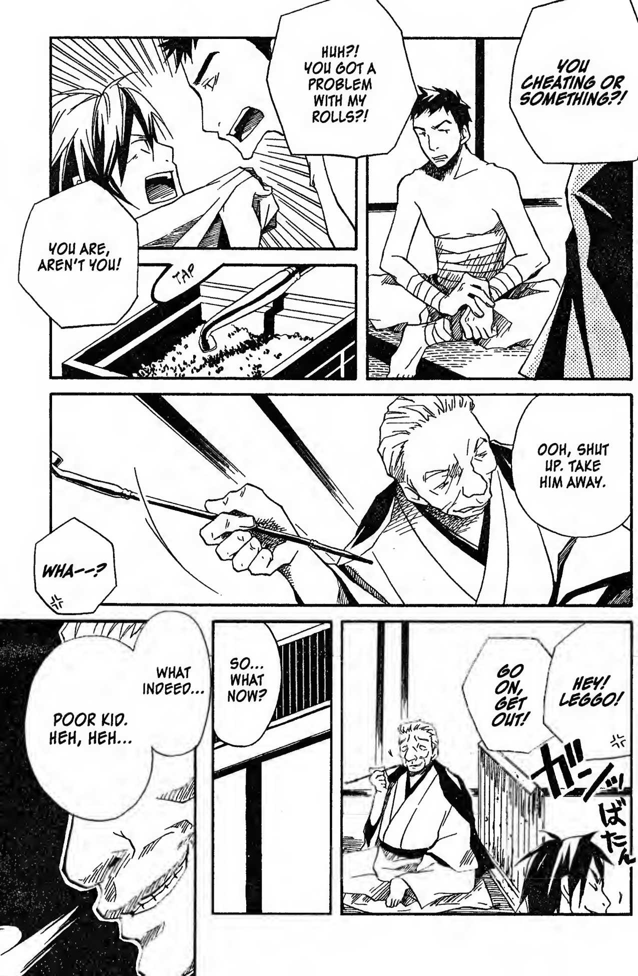

IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME...
...EH, SHOU?
HOW'S IT GOING?
Just as planned...
TALK...!
...or I'll make you eat one! These're super spicy!
Mmrf
J-JUST AS PLANNED!
Mmrf
Eek!

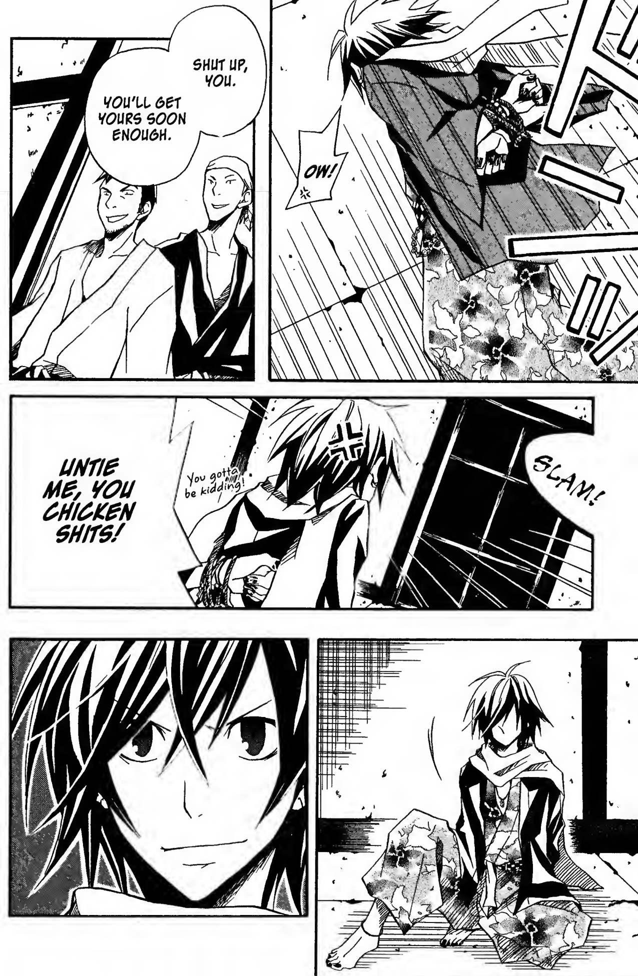

THEN I'M GOING, TOO! ♪
Gah!
Odd!
Even!
スッ
It's all tied up!
I won! ☆
Shit!
カサ
ENTO-SAN, THE BOSS IS CALLING YOU.
BE RIGHT THERE.
Fsh

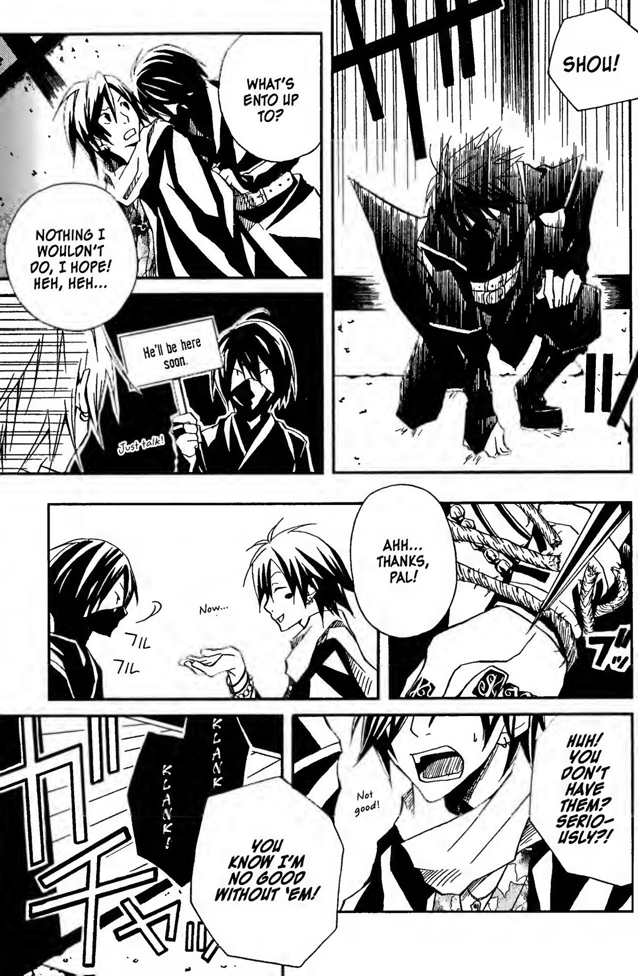

C'MON! BET!
EVEN.
ODD.
WHAT'S YOUR DEAL ANYWAY, MISTER?
EVEN.
SHOW TIME!
TWO-SIX, EVEN!
THAT'S A GOOD SIGN, MISTER!
EASY WIN! ♪
OKAY... NEXT, NEXT!
DECIDE! DECIDE!
EVEN!
ODD!

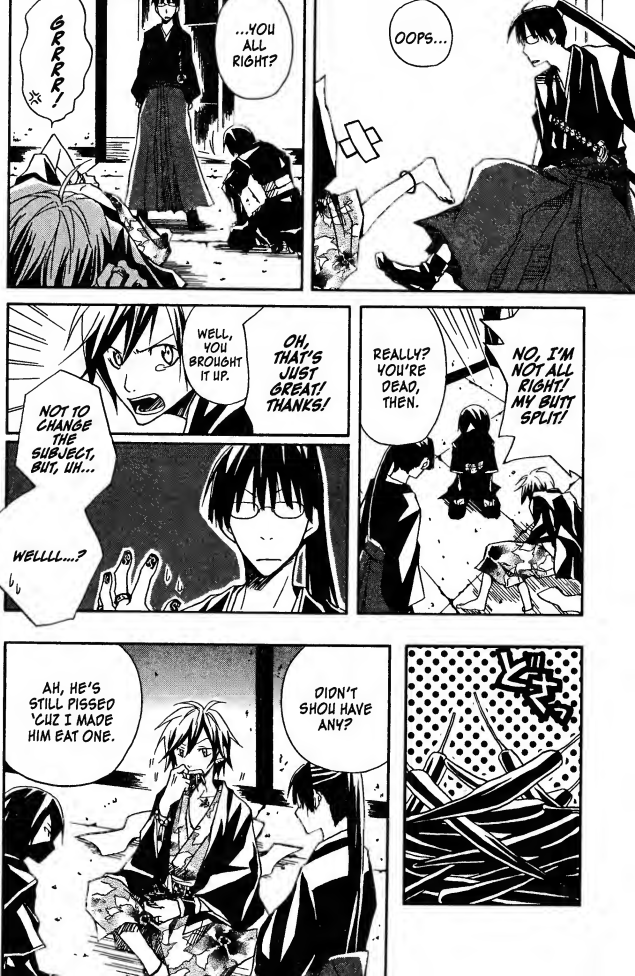

NEXT DAY
HUH?
DAY AFTER NEXT
HUH? WHA?
I ALWAYS LOSE IT ALL IN THE END, HUH?
But today's my day!
LOOK, KID.
LATELY YOUR...
...TAB'S BEEN PILING UP, EH?
WHAT? HAS IT NOW?
WELL, YOU'RE A GOOD REGULAR, KID, SO I'LL TELL YOU WHAT...
...I'LL...
...MAKE YOU A DEAL. DOUBLE OR NOTHING.
IF YOU WIN, YOU DON'T OWE ME A CENT.
SERIOUSLY?! YOU'RE ON!

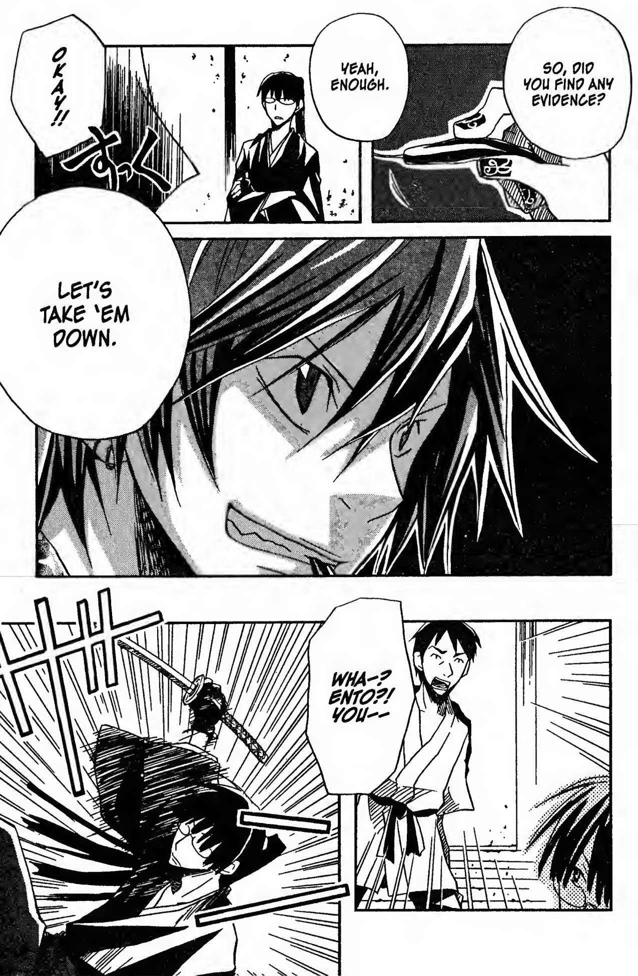

YOU LOSE.
OOH, DAMMIT! I'M SO NOT LUCKY!!
ガし ガし、
LOOKS LIKE YOU OWE ME DOUBLE, EH?
ぴた、
WHAAT?!
HEY, THAT'S NOT RIGHT! WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?!

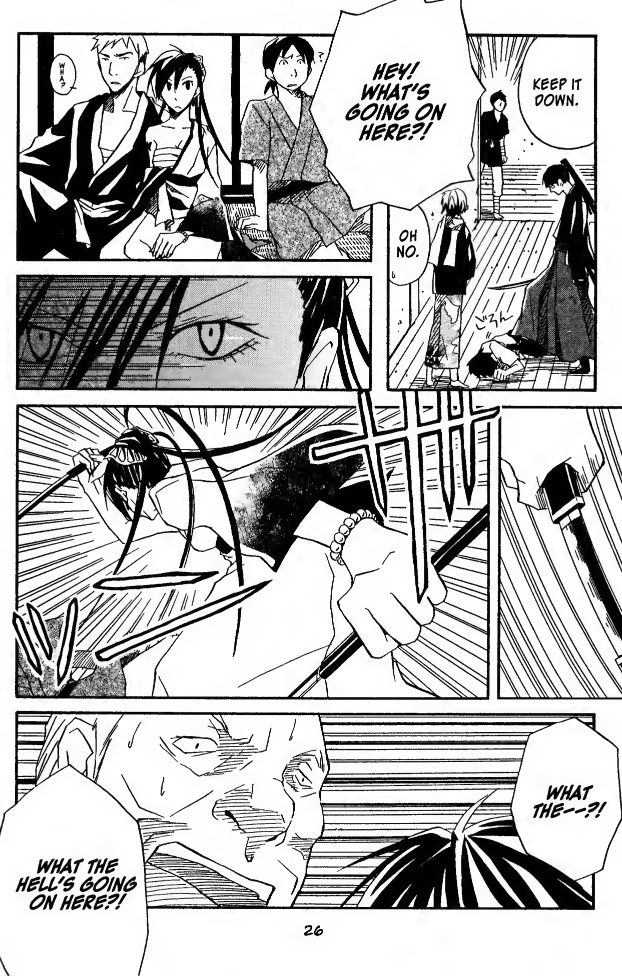

YOU CHEATING OR SOMETHING?!
HUH?! YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH MY ROLLS?!
YOU ARE, AREN'T YOU!
TAP
OOH, SHUT UP. TAKE HIM AWAY.
WHA--?
HEY! LEGGO!
GO ON, GET OUT!
ガン
ばたん
SO... WHAT NOW?
WHAT INDEED...
POOR KID. HEH, HEH...

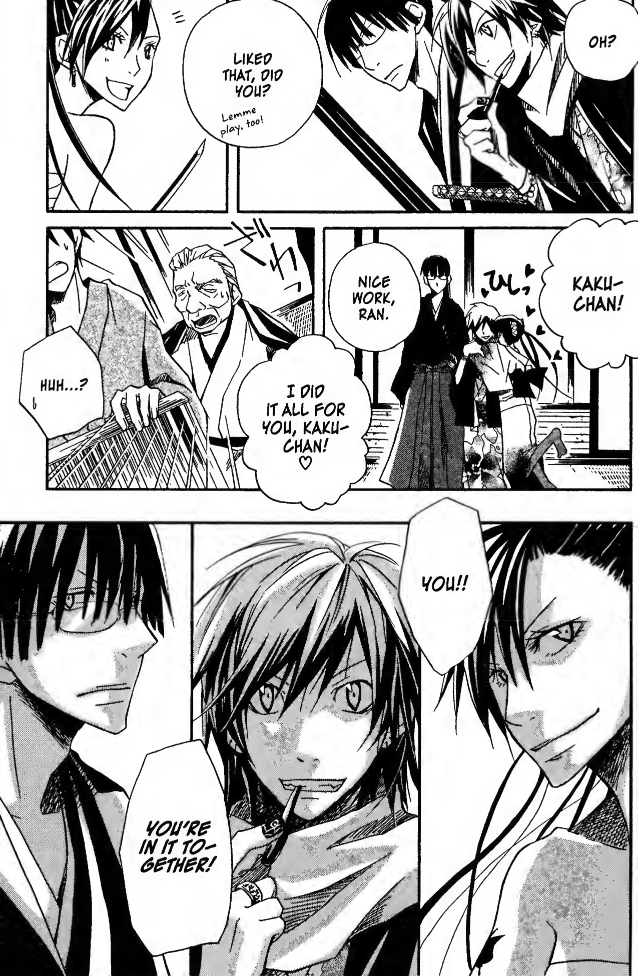

OW!
SHUT UP, YOU.
YOU'LL GET YOURS SOON ENOUGH.
SLAM!
UNTIE ME, YOU CHICKEN SHITS!
You gotta be kidding!

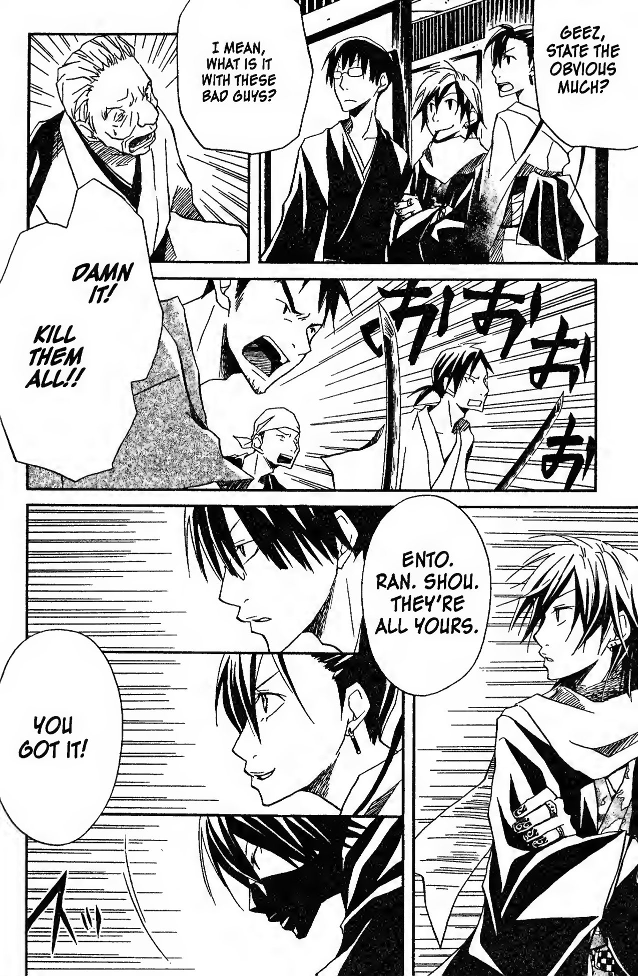

SHOU!
WHAT'S ENTO UP TO?
NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO, I HOPE! HEH, HEH...
He'll be here soon.
Just talk!
AHH... THANKS, PAL!
ブッ
Now...
フル
フル
HUH! YOU DON'T HAVE THEM? SERIOUSLY?!
Not good!
KLANK
KLANK!
YOU KNOW I'M NO GOOD WITHOUT 'EM!
ガチャッ

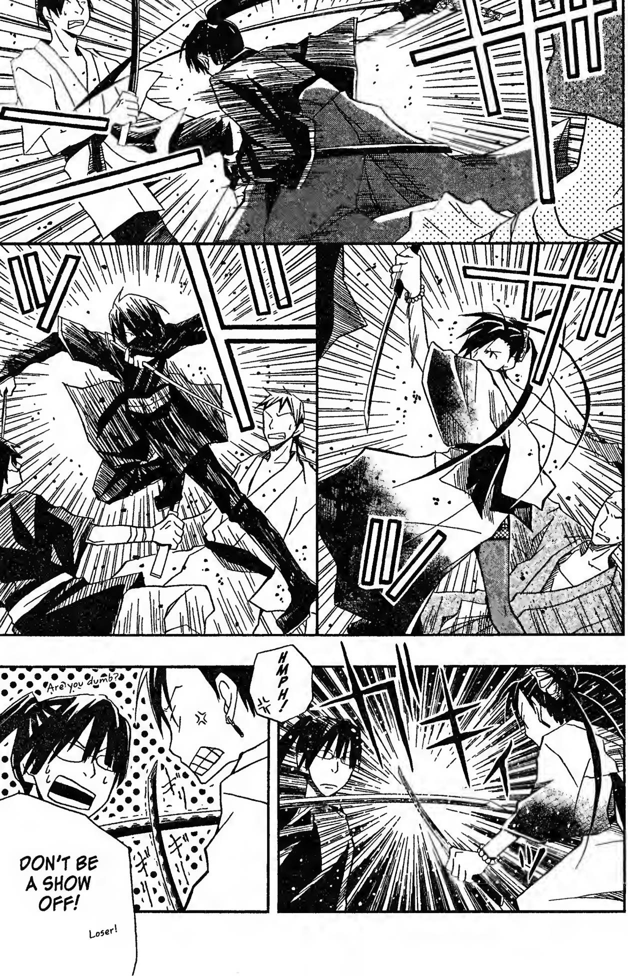

OOPS...
...YOU ALL RIGHT?
GRRRR!
NO, I'M NOT ALL RIGHT! MY BUTT SPLIT!
REALLY? YOU'RE DEAD, THEN.
OH, THAT'S JUST GREAT! THANKS!
WELL, YOU BROUGHT IT UP.
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT, UH...
WELLLL...?
DIDN'T SHOU HAVE ANY?
AH, HE'S STILL PISSED 'CUZ I MADE HIM EAT ONE.

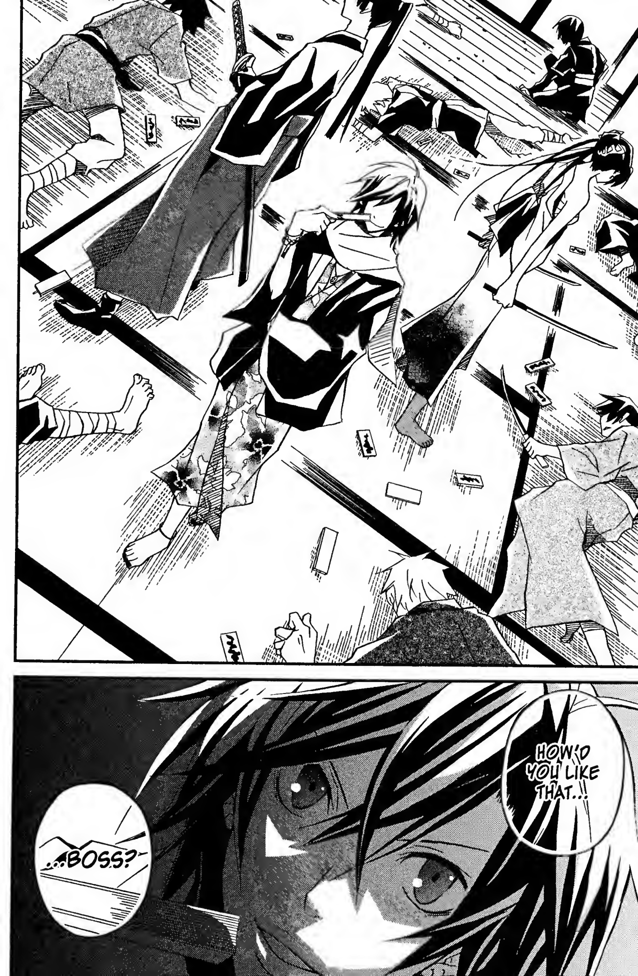

SO, DID YOU FIND ANY EVIDENCE?
YEAH, ENOUGH.
OKAY!!
すっく
LET'S TAKE 'EM DOWN.
WHA-? ENTO?! YOU--

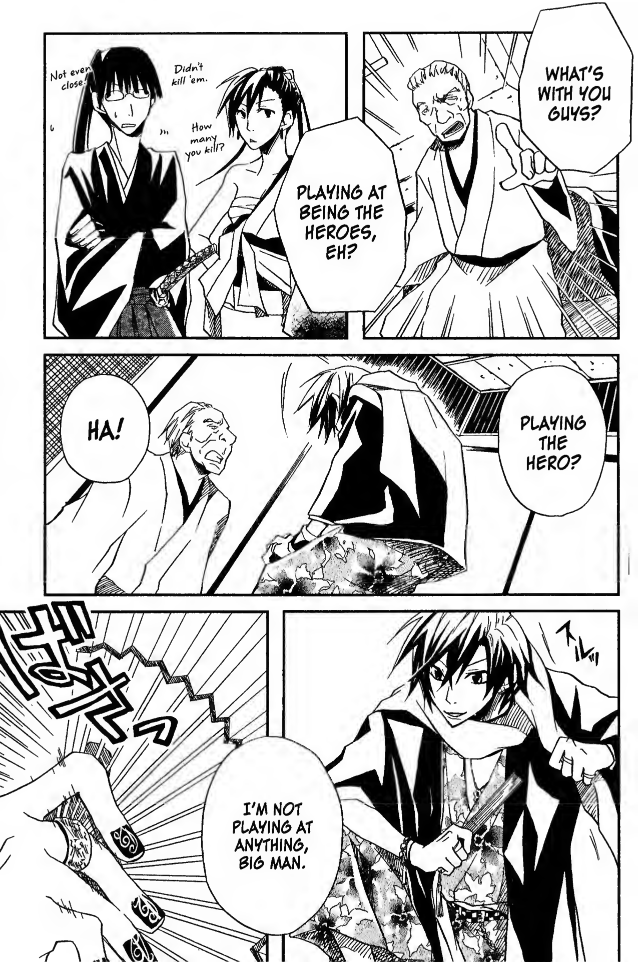

HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!
KEEP IT DOWN.
OH NO.
じろん
WHA?
?
WHAT THE--?!
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?!

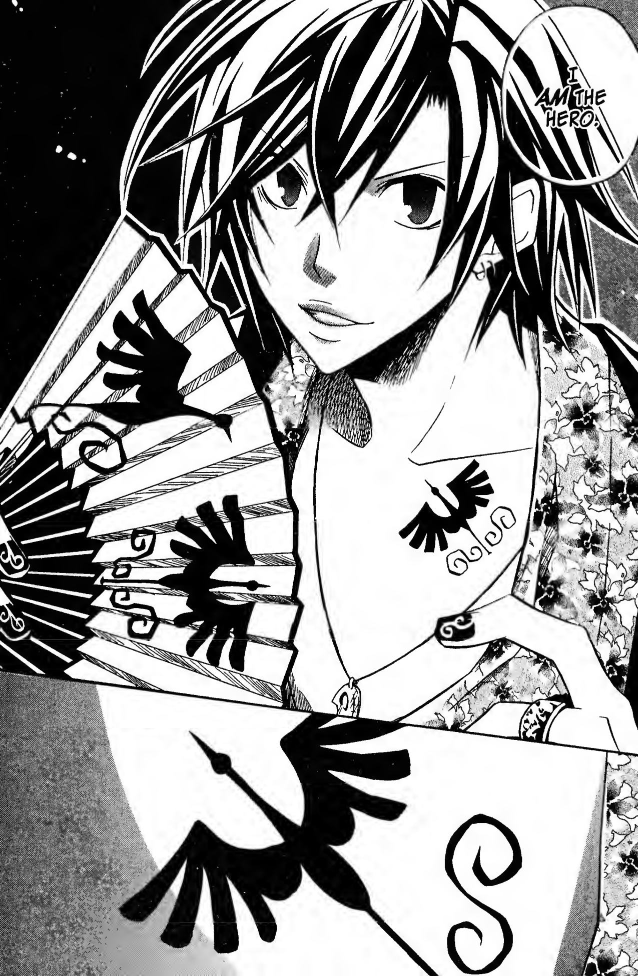

OH?
LIKED THAT, DID YOU?
Lemme play, too!
KAKU-CHAN!
ひし
NICE WORK, RAN.
I DID IT ALL FOR YOU, KAKU-CHAN! ♡
HUH...?
YOU!!
YOU'RE IN IT TOGETHER!

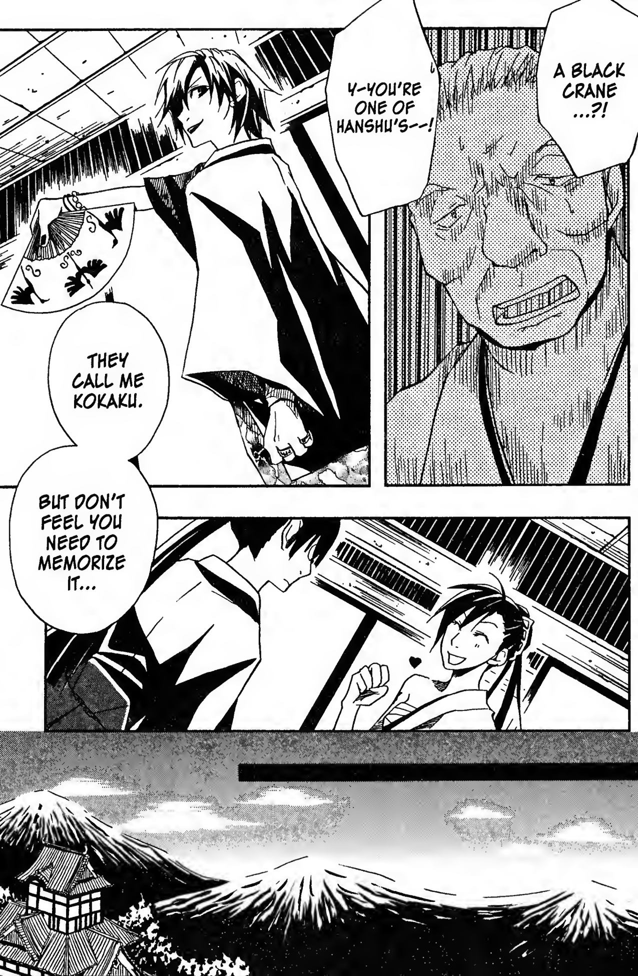

GEEZ, STATE THE OBVIOUS MUCH?
I MEAN, WHAT IS IT WITH THESE BAD GUYS?
おおおお
DAMN IT!
KILL THEM ALL!!
ENTO. RAN. SHOU. THEY'RE ALL YOURS.
YOU GOT IT!
ズッ

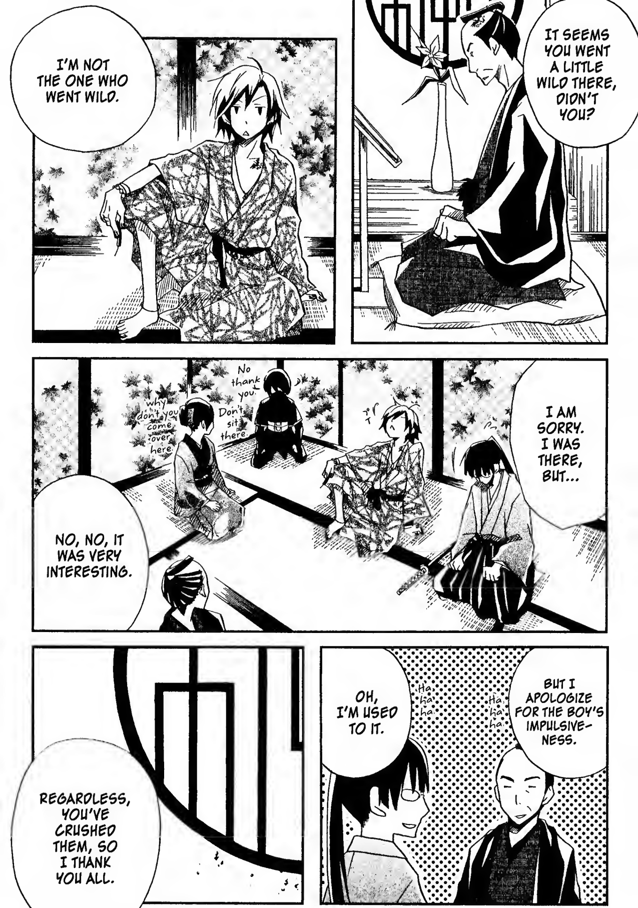

HMPH!
Are you dumb?
DON'T BE A SHOW OFF!
Loser!

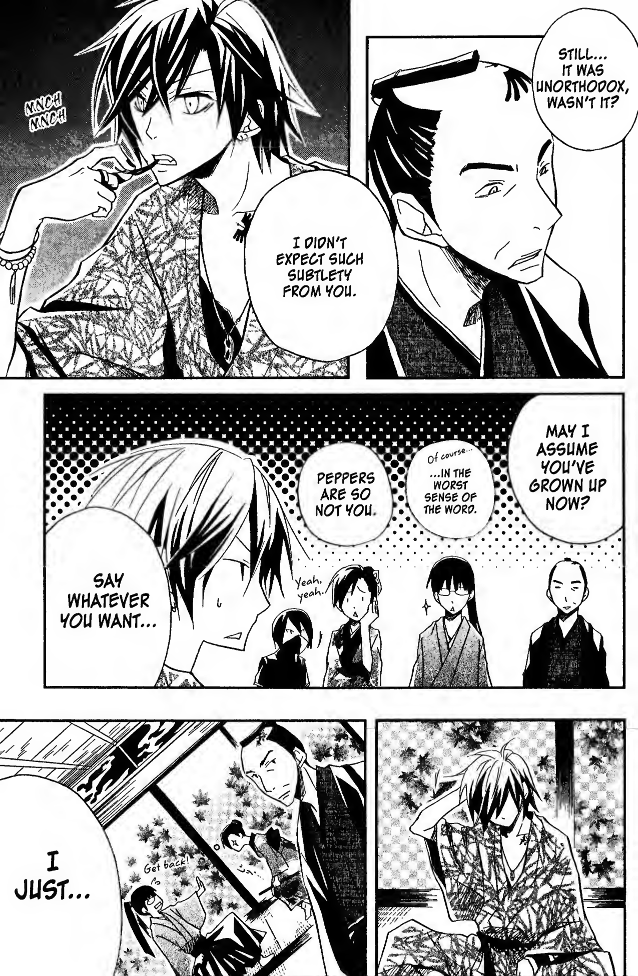

HOW'D YOU LIKE THAT...!
...BOSS?

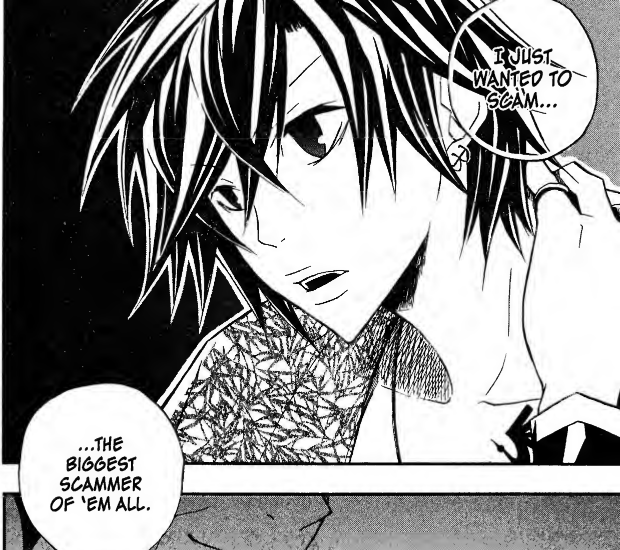

WHAT'S WITH YOU GUYS?
PLAYING AT BEING THE HEROES, EH?
How many you kill?
Didn't kill 'em.
Not even close!
PLAYING THE HERO?
HA!
スルッ
I'M NOT PLAYING AT ANYTHING, BIG MAN.


I AM THE HERO.
...


A BLACK CRANE ...?!
Y-YOU'RE ONE OF HANSHU'S--!
THEY CALL ME KOKAKU.
BUT DON'T FEEL YOU NEED TO MEMORIZE IT...


IT SEEMS YOU WENT A LITTLE WILD THERE, DIDN'T YOU?
I'M NOT THE ONE WHO WENT WILD.
I AM SORRY. I WAS THERE, BUT...
No thank you.
Don't sit there.
why don't you come over here.
NO, NO, IT WAS VERY INTERESTING.
BUT I APOLOGIZE FOR THE BOY'S IMPULSIVENESS.
Ha ha ha
OH, I'M USED TO IT.
Ha ha ha
REGARDLESS, YOU'VE CRUSHED THEM, SO I THANK YOU ALL.

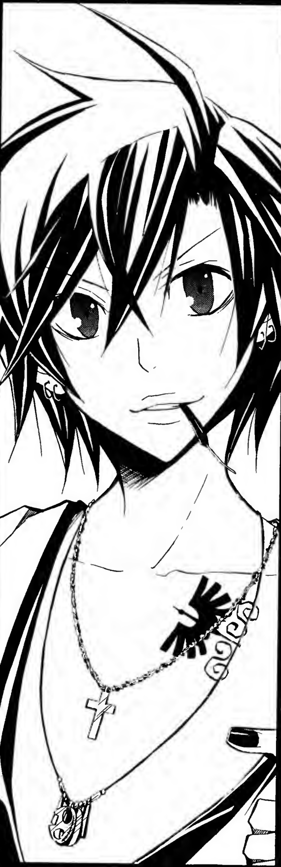

STILL... IT WAS UNORTHODOX, WASN'T IT?
MNCH MNCH
I DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH SUBTLETY FROM YOU.
MAY I ASSUME YOU'VE GROWN UP NOW?
Of course...
...IN THE WORST SENSE OF THE WORD.
PEPPERS ARE SO NOT YOU.
Yeah, yeah.
SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT...
Get back!
I JUST...


I JUST WANTED TO SCAM...
...THE BIGGEST SCAMMER OF 'EM ALL.
KAKU-CHAN, YOU'RE SO COOL! ♡
Quit it!
OH, SAY SOMETHING, WOULD YA?

1ST SUBJECT: THE VOLUME OF LONG LIFE/THE END

2ND SUBJECT:

THE VOLUME OF THE DANCING CRANE



Super Spicy Hero ☆

Sento Kokaku

Born July 26th / 16 years old

Sign: Leo / Blood Type: O

Favorite Food: Peppers ☆

Hobbies: Collecting accessories

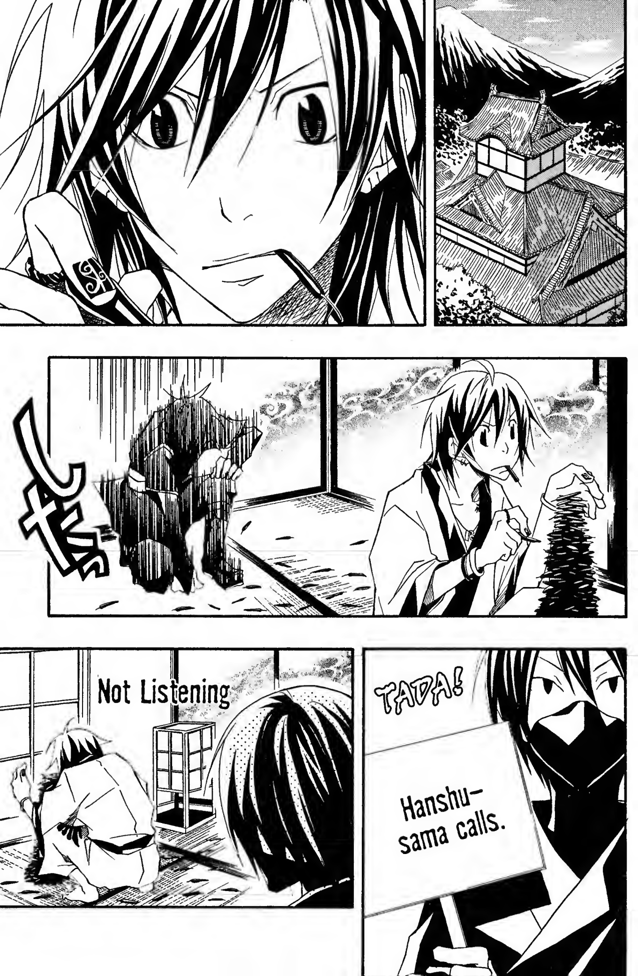
Dislikes: Studying

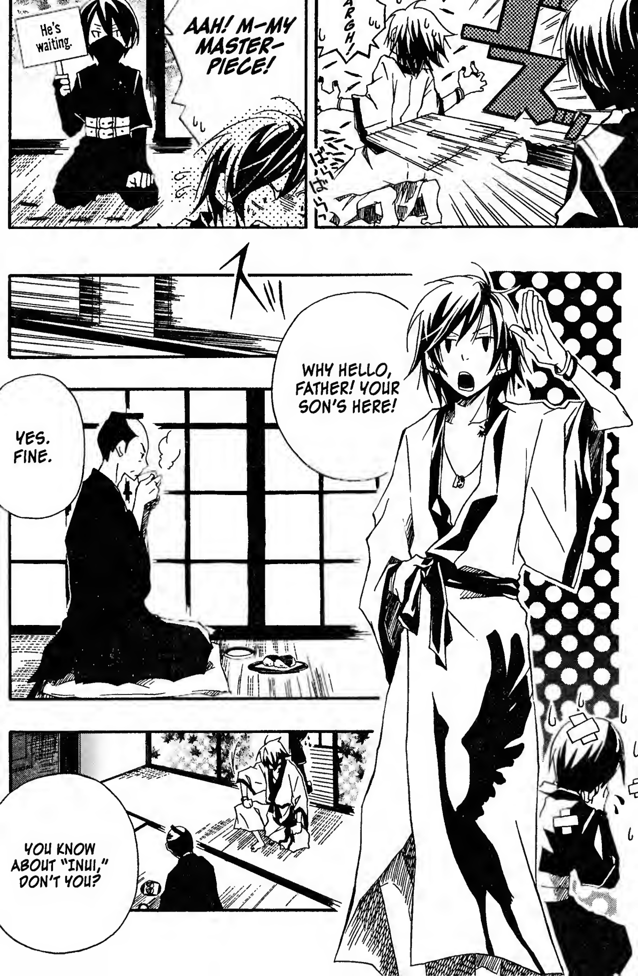
Specialties: Using Tsumugi's inventions.

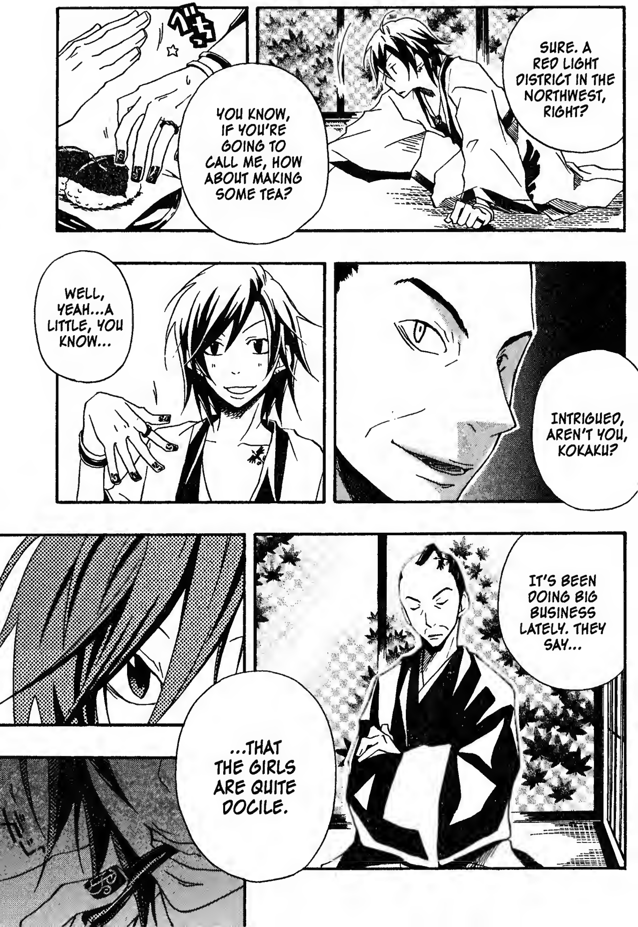
In Japanese, his name has allusions to the legendary white crane.

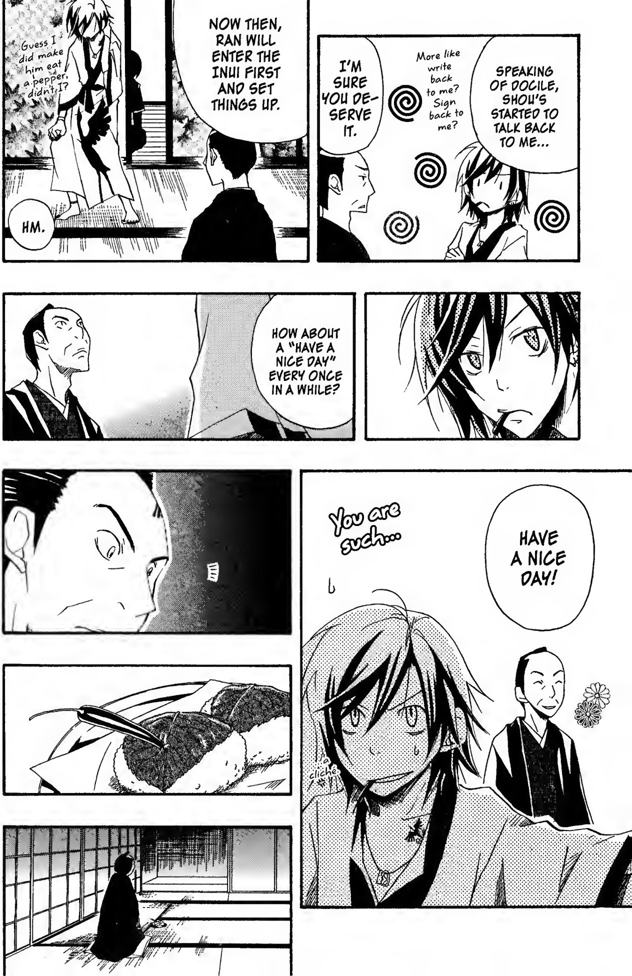
The peppers are because I wanted to create a character that was always eating something. Around that time there were a lot of characters that liked sweet stuff, so I did the opposite and went with something spicy!

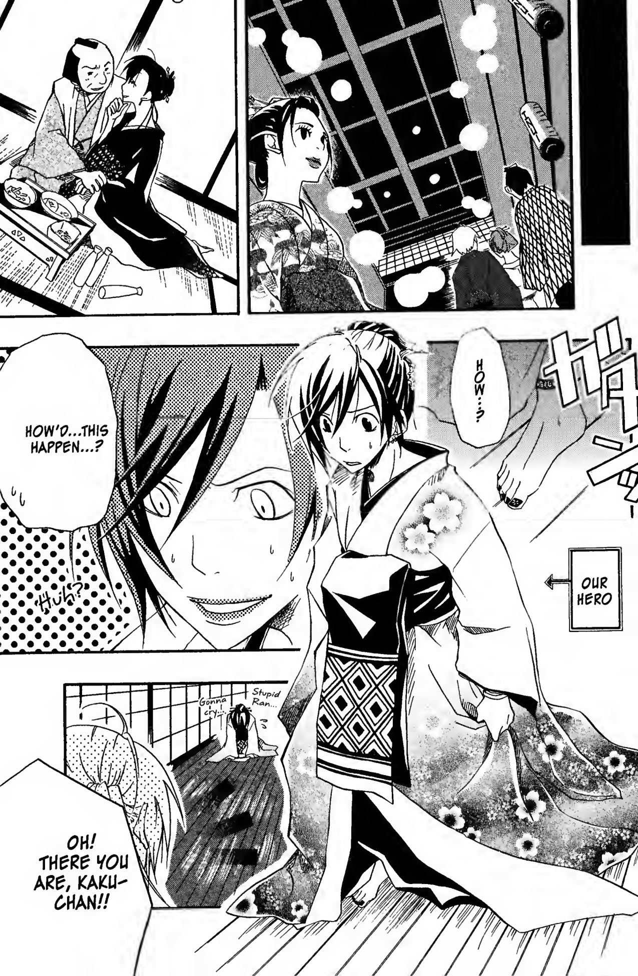
His thematic color is red. He was supposed to be a cool character, but he's always shouting.

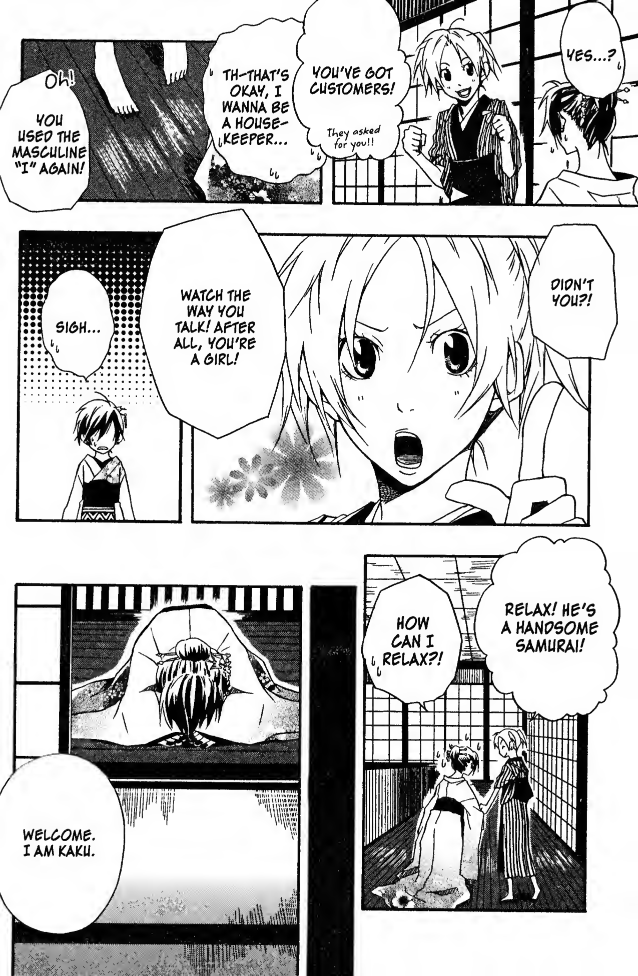

しょぼ
TADA!
Hanshu-sama calls.
Not Listening

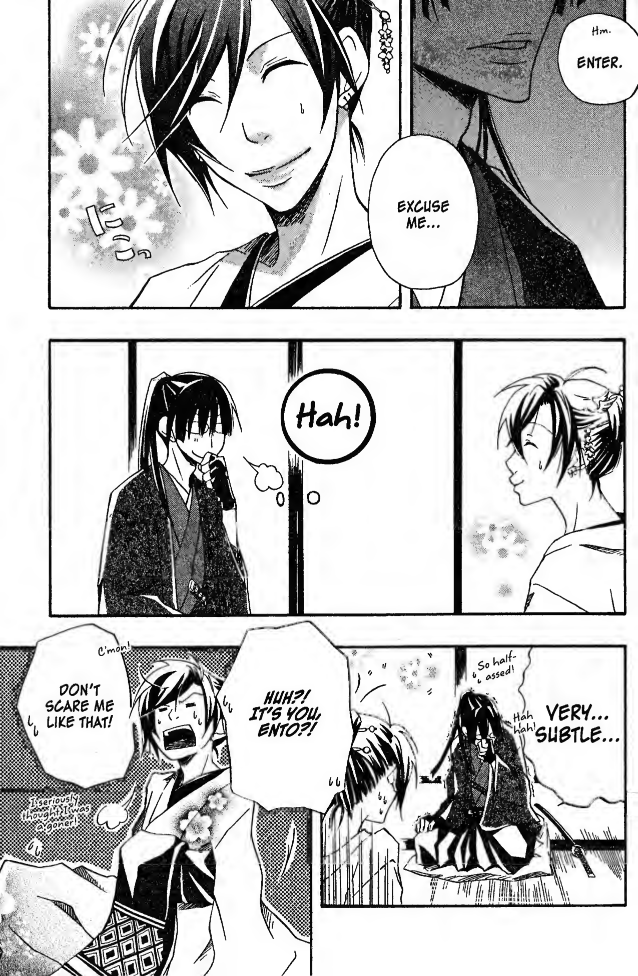

ARGH!
ばらばら
He's waiting.
AAH! M-MY MASTERPIECE!
WHY HELLO, FATHER! YOUR SON'S HERE!
YES. FINE.
YOU KNOW ABOUT "INUI," DON'T YOU?

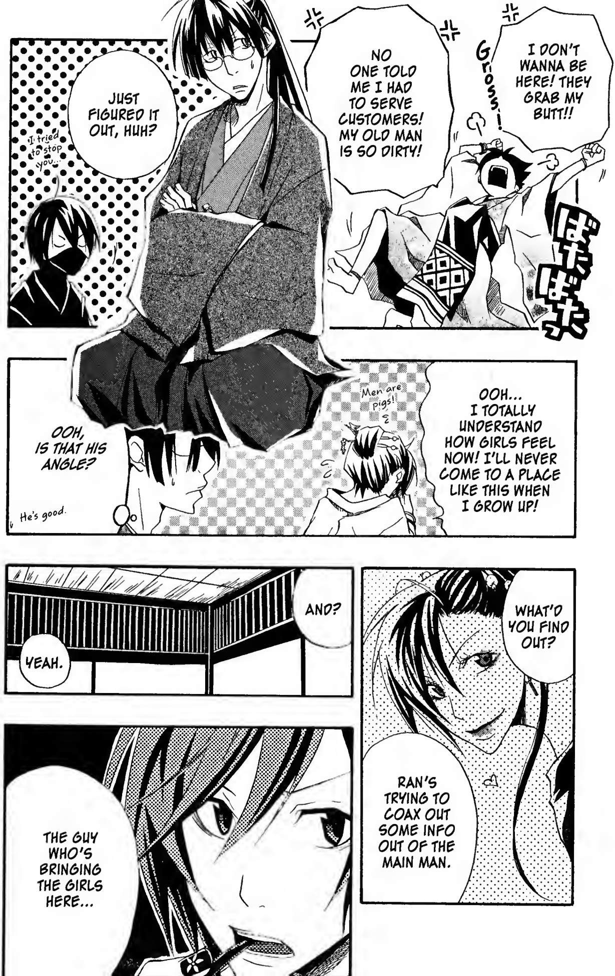

SURE. A RED LIGHT DISTRICT IN THE NORTHWEST, RIGHT?
べちっ
YOU KNOW, IF YOU'RE GOING TO CALL ME, HOW ABOUT MAKING SOME TEA?
INTRIGUED, AREN'T YOU, KOKAKU?
WELL, YEAH...A LITTLE, YOU KNOW...
IT'S BEEN DOING BIG BUSINESS LATELY. THEY SAY...
...THAT THE GIRLS ARE QUITE DOCILE.

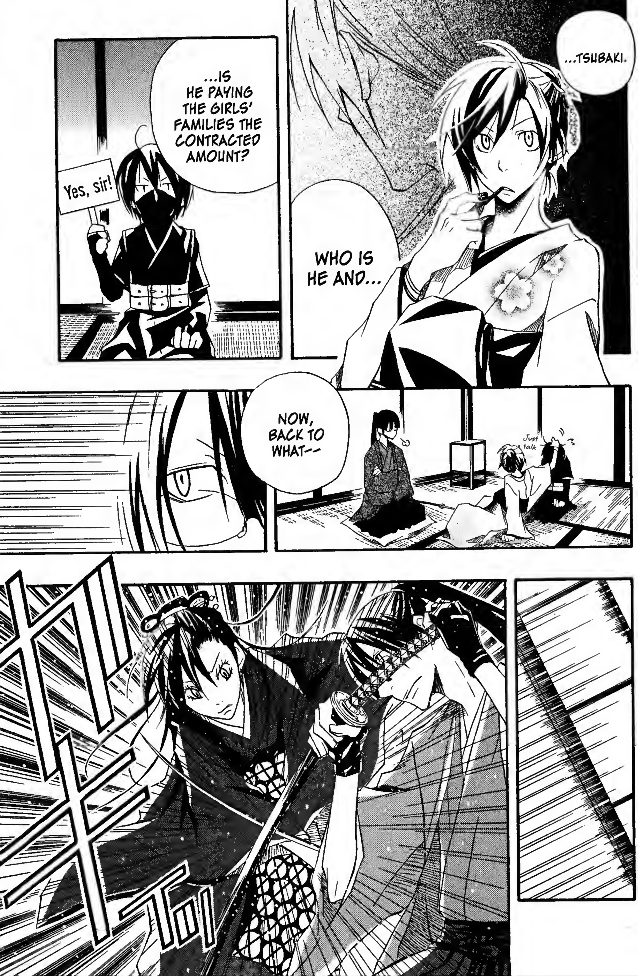

SPEAKING OF DOCILE, SHOU'S STARTED TO TALK BACK TO ME...
More like write back to me? Sign back to me?
I'M SURE YOU DESERVE IT.
Guess I did make him eat a pepper, didn't I?
HM.
NOW THEN, RAN WILL ENTER THE INUI FIRST AND SET THINGS UP.
HOW ABOUT A "HAVE A NICE DAY" EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE?
HAVE A NICE DAY!
You are such...
a cliché

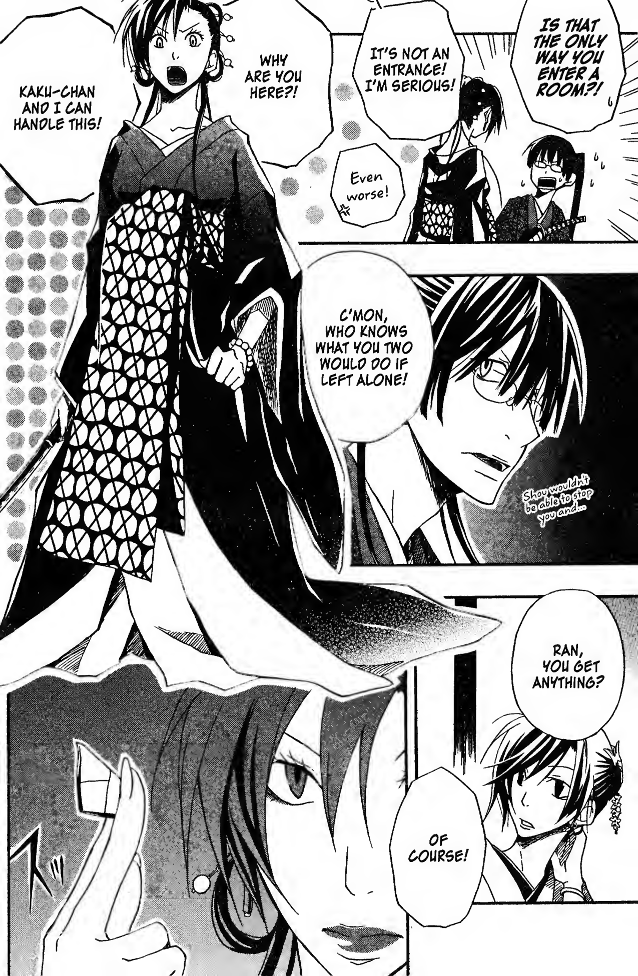

HOW...?
ガターン
OUR HERO
HOW'D...THIS HAPPEN...?
Huh?
Stupid Ran...
Gonna cry...
OH! THERE YOU ARE, KAKU-CHAN!!

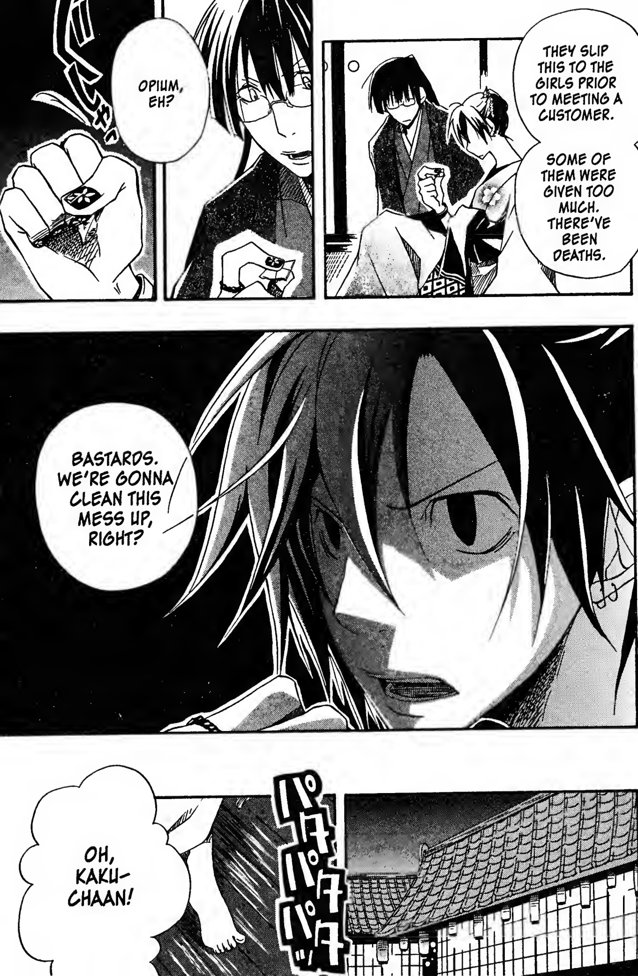

YES...?
YOU'VE GOT CUSTOMERS!
They asked for you!!
TH-THAT'S OKAY, I WANNA BE A HOUSEKEEPER...
Oh!
YOU USED THE MASCULINE "I" AGAIN!
DIDN'T YOU?!
WATCH THE WAY YOU TALK! AFTER ALL, YOU'RE A GIRL!
SIGH...
RELAX! HE'S A HANDSOME SAMURAI!
HOW CAN I RELAX?!
WELCOME. I AM KAKU.

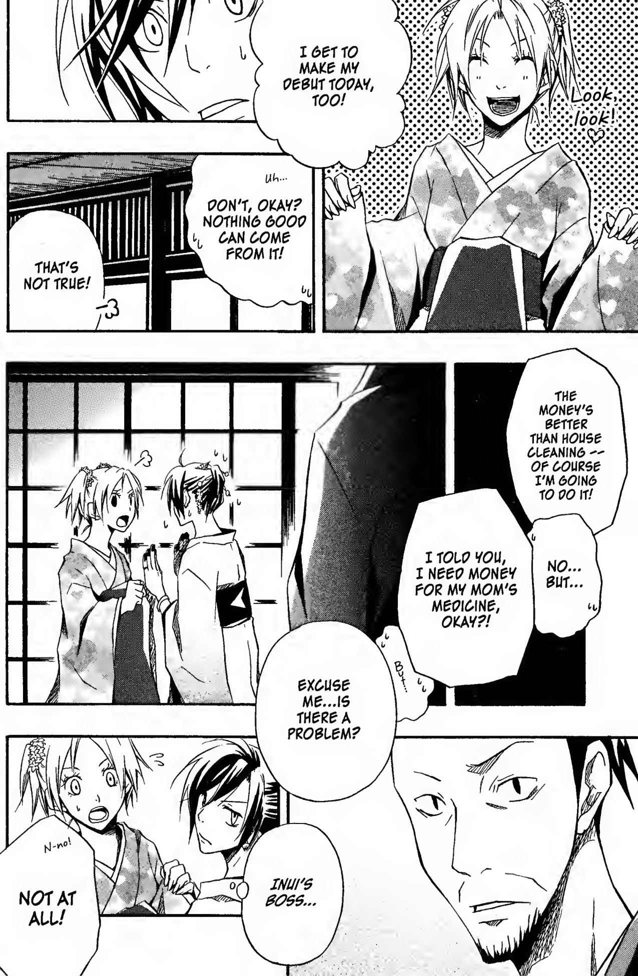

Hm.
ENTER.
EXCUSE ME...
にこっ
Hah!
So half-assed!
Hah hah!
VERY... SUBTLE...
HUH?! IT'S YOU, ENTO?!
C'mon!
DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!
I seriously thought I was a goner!

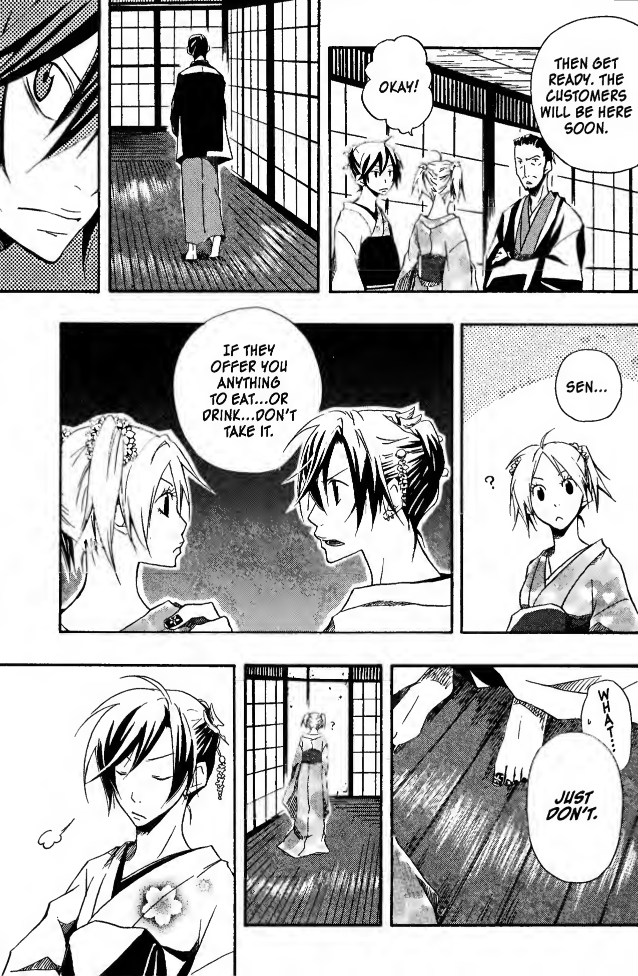

I DON'T WANNA BE HERE! THEY GRAB MY BUTT!!
Gross!
ぱたぱた
NO ONE TOLD ME I HAD TO SERVE CUSTOMERS! MY OLD MAN IS SO DIRTY!
JUST FIGURED IT OUT, HUH?
I tried to stop you...
OOH... I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND HOW GIRLS FEEL NOW! I'LL NEVER COME TO A PLACE LIKE THIS WHEN I GROW UP!
Men are pigs!
OOH, IS THAT HIS ANGLE?
He's good.
WHAT'D YOU FIND OUT?
RAN'S TRYING TO COAX OUT SOME INFO OUT OF THE MAIN MAN.
AND?
YEAH.
THE GUY WHO'S BRINGING THE GIRLS HERE...

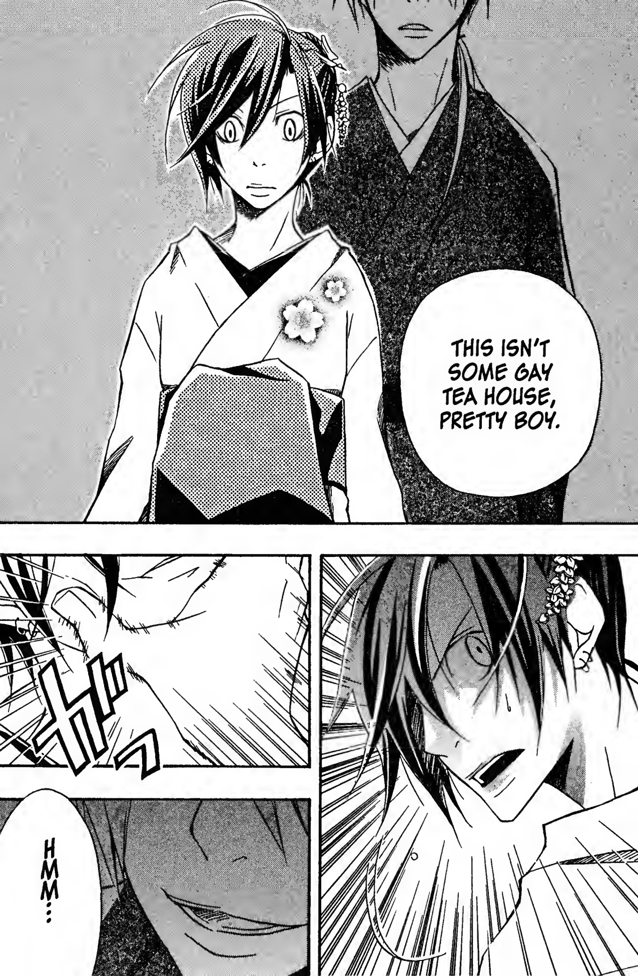

...TSUBAKI.
WHO IS HE AND...
...IS HE PAYING THE GIRLS' FAMILIES THE CONTRACTED AMOUNT?
Yes, sir!
NOW, BACK TO WHAT--
Just talk

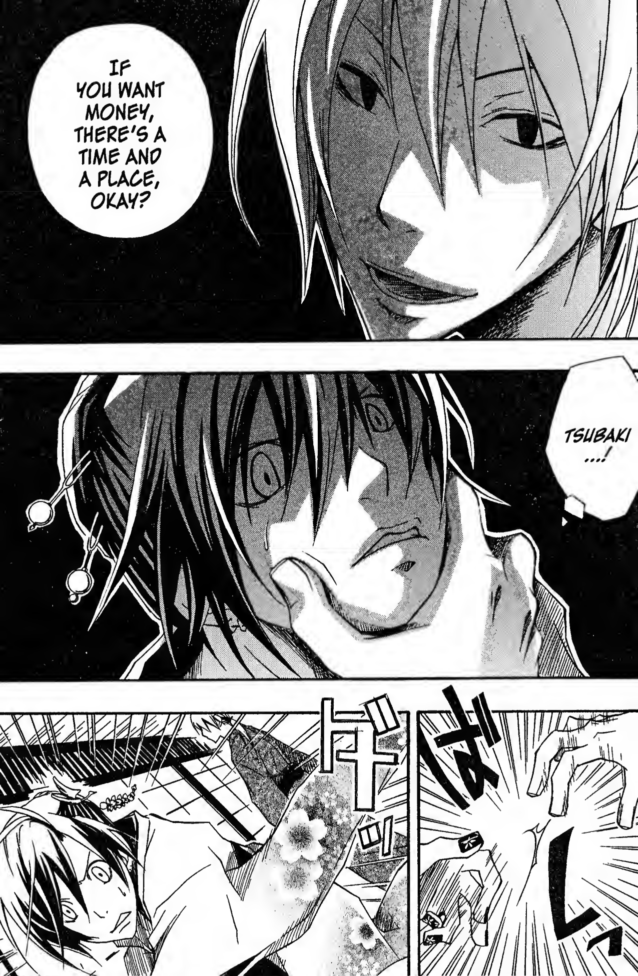

IS THAT THE ONLY WAY YOU ENTER A ROOM?!
IT'S NOT AN ENTRANCE! I'M SERIOUS!
Even worse!
WHY ARE YOU HERE?!
KAKU-CHAN AND I CAN HANDLE THIS!
C'MON, WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU TWO WOULD DO IF LEFT ALONE!
Shou wouldn't be able to stop you and...
RAN, YOU GET ANYTHING?
OF COURSE!

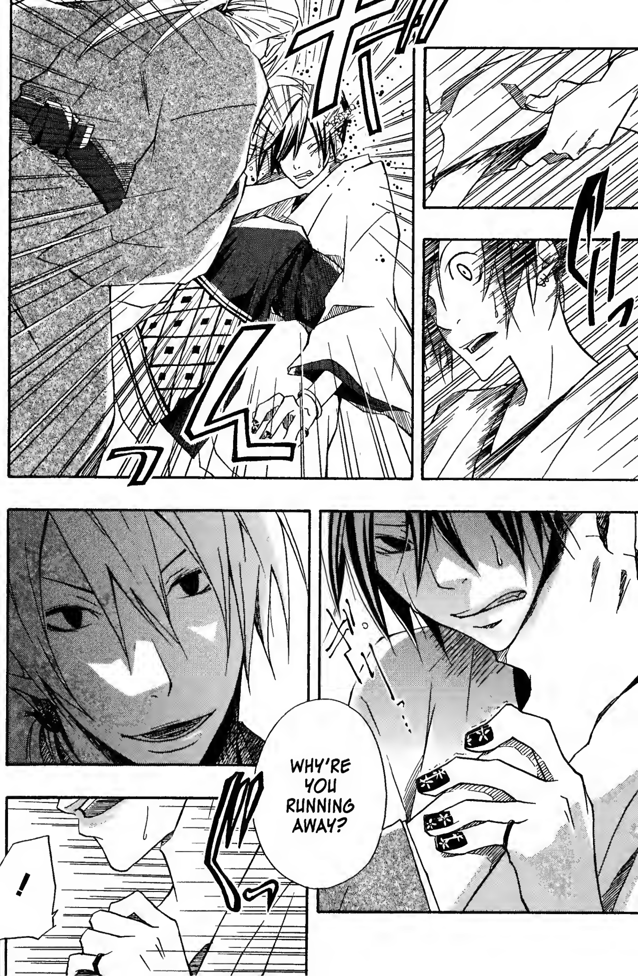

THEY SLIP THIS TO THE GIRLS PRIOR TO MEETING A CUSTOMER.
SOME OF THEM WERE GIVEN TOO MUCH. THERE'VE BEEN DEATHS.
OPIUM, EH?
BASTARDS. WE'RE GONNA CLEAN THIS MESS UP, RIGHT?
パタパタパタッ
OH, KAKU-CHAAN!

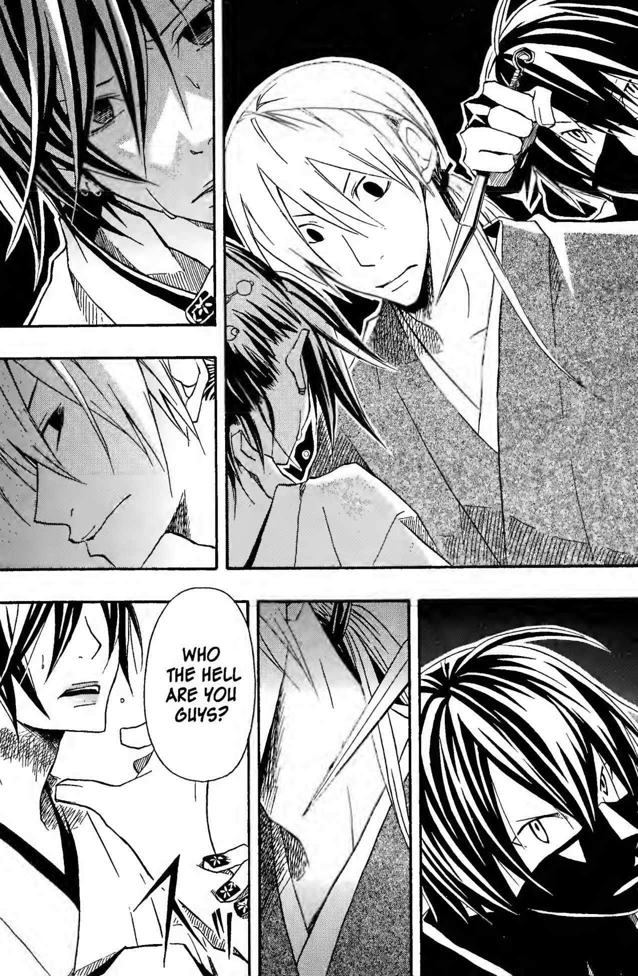

Look, look! ♡
I GET TO MAKE MY DEBUT TODAY, TOO!
Uh...
DON'T, OKAY? NOTHING GOOD CAN COME FROM IT!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
THE MONEY'S BETTER THAN HOUSE CLEANING -- OF COURSE I'M GOING TO DO IT!
NO... BUT...
I TOLD YOU, I NEED MONEY FOR MY MOM'S MEDICINE, OKAY?!
But...
EXCUSE ME...IS THERE A PROBLEM?
INUI'S BOSS...
N-no!
NOT AT ALL!

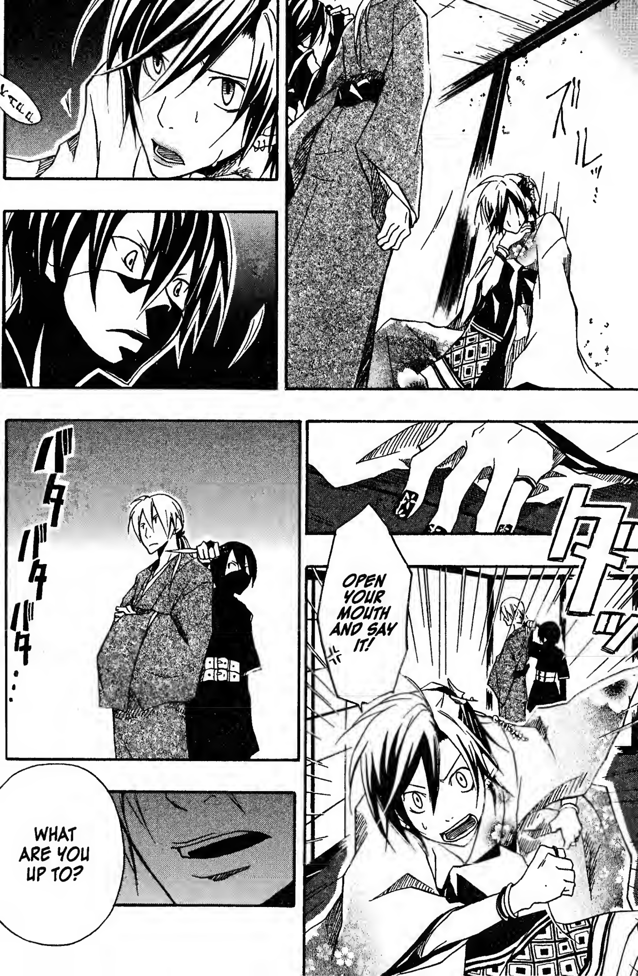

THEN GET READY. THE CUSTOMERS WILL BE HERE SOON.
OKAY!
SEN...
?
IF THEY OFFER YOU ANYTHING TO EAT...OR DRINK...DON'T TAKE IT.
WHAT...
JUST DON'T.
?

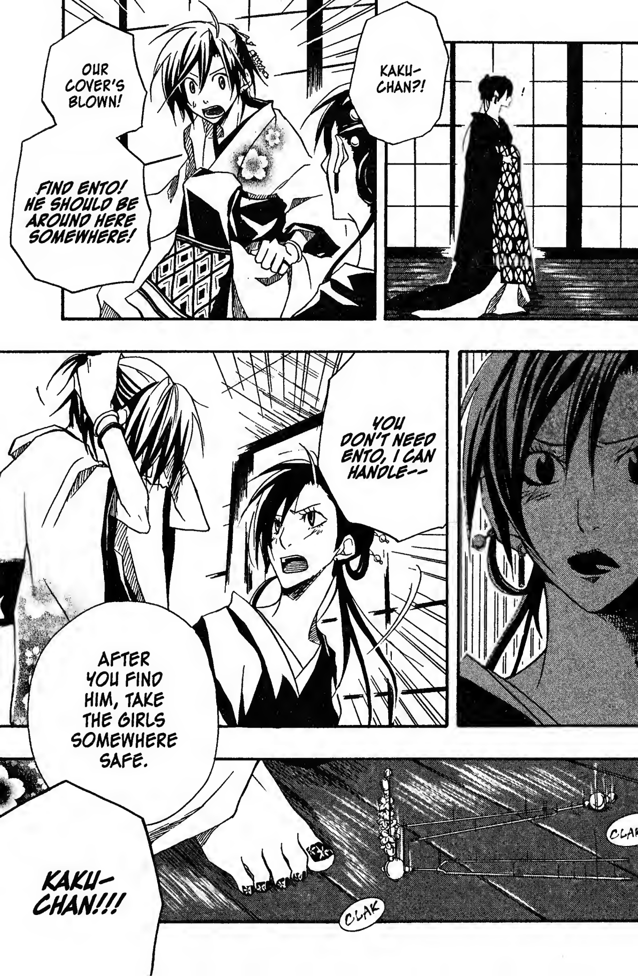

THIS ISN'T SOME GAY TEA HOUSE, PRETTY BOY.
ガドッ
HMM...

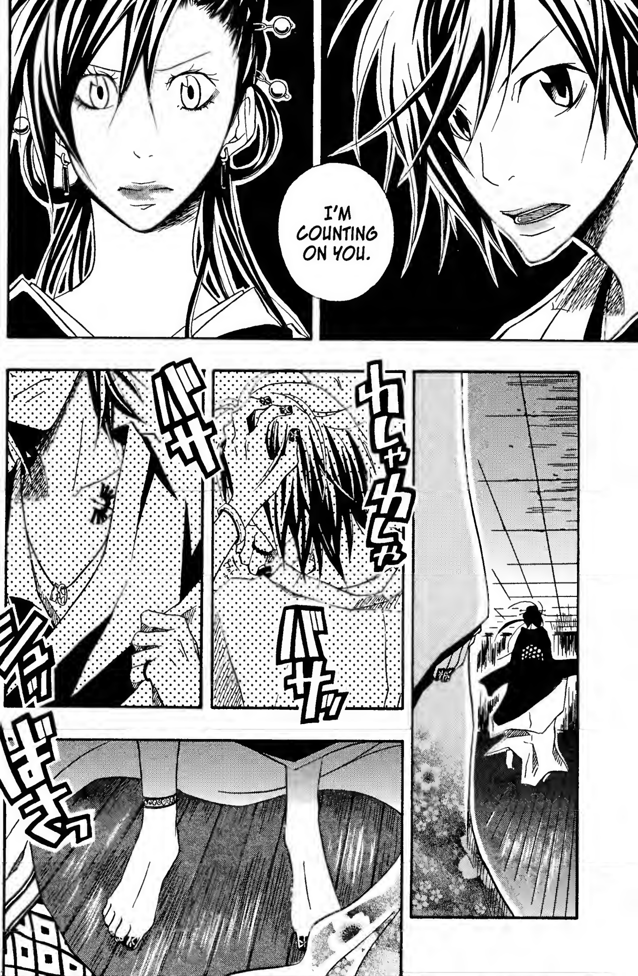

IF YOU WANT MONEY, THERE'S A TIME AND A PLACE, OKAY?
TSUBAKI ....!
ばしっ
ドガッ

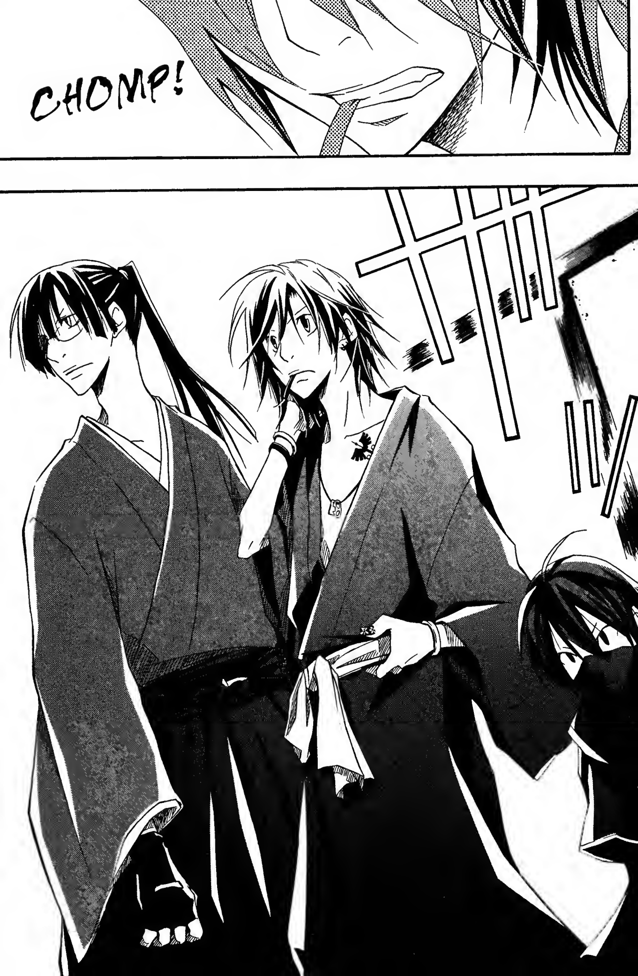

WHY'RE YOU RUNNING AWAY?
!

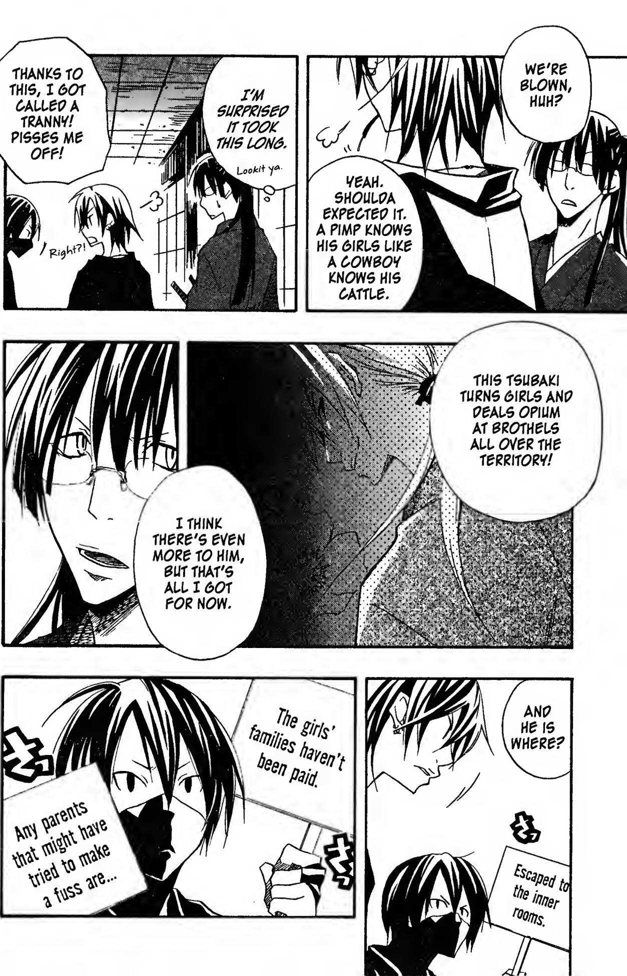

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU GUYS?

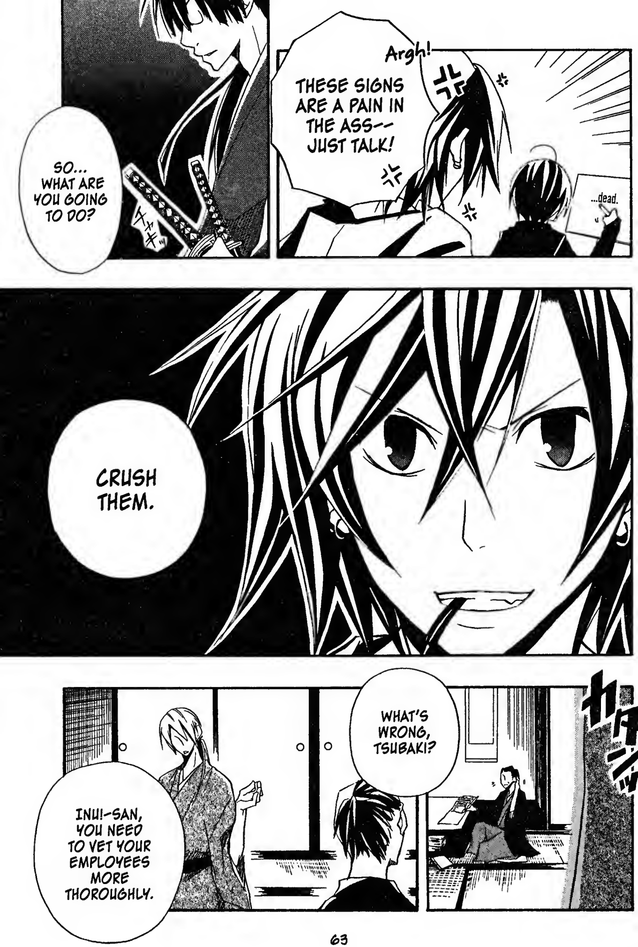

ズルッ
タッ
OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SAY IT!
バタバタバタ…
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

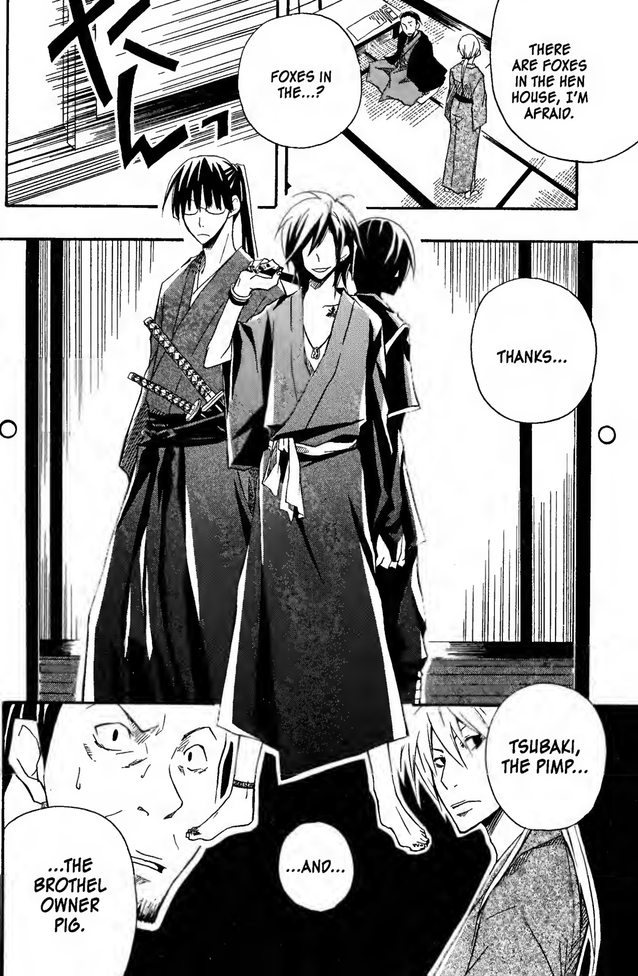

KAKU-CHAN?!
!
OUR COVER'S BLOWN!
FIND ENTO! HE SHOULD BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE!
YOU DON'T NEED ENTO, I CAN HANDLE--
AFTER YOU FIND HIM, TAKE THE GIRLS SOMEWHERE SAFE.
CLAK
CLAK
KAKU-CHAN!!!

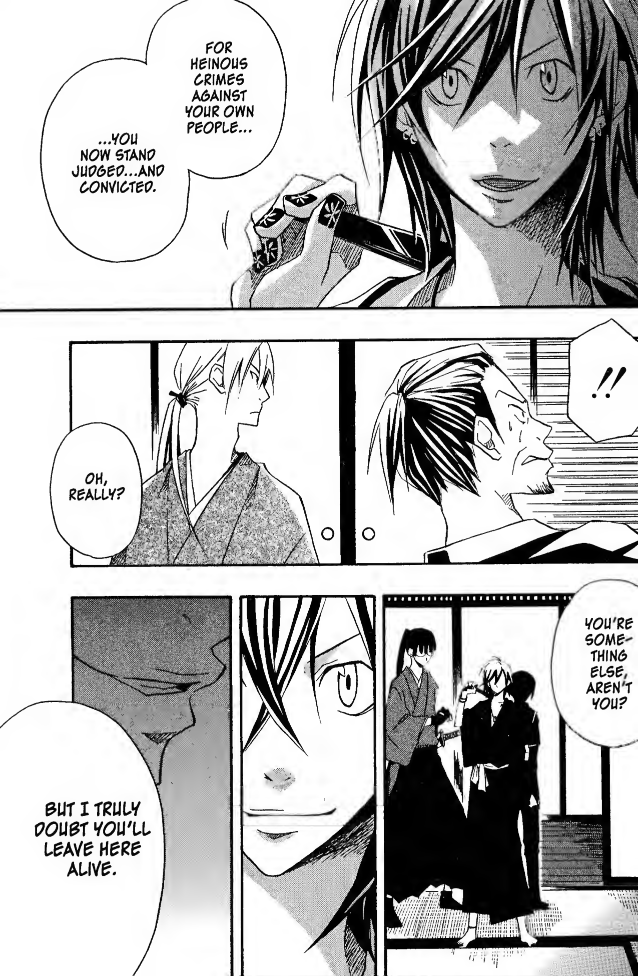

I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
わしゃわしゃ
バサッ
バサ
ぼきっ

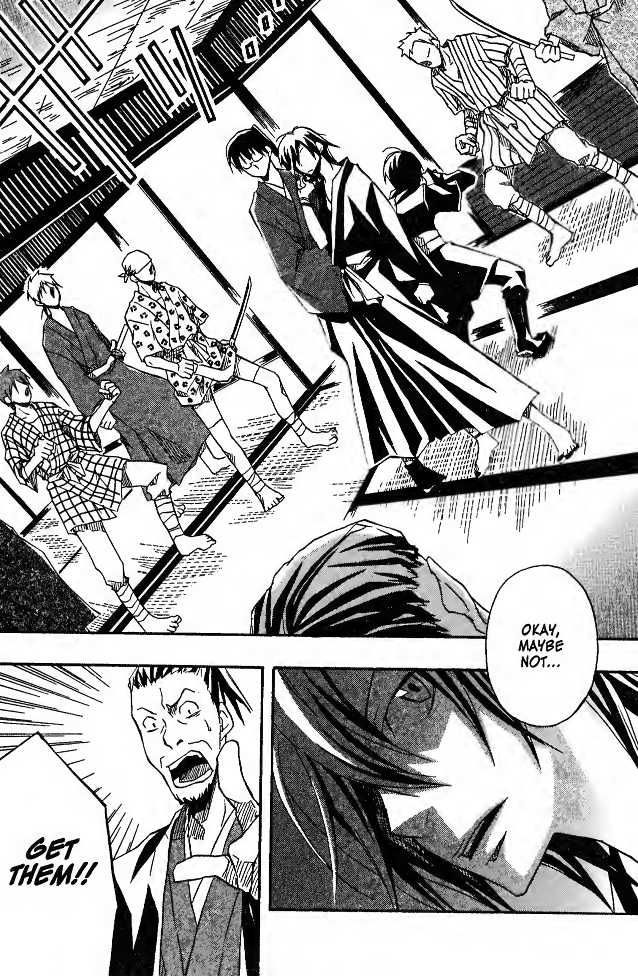

CHOMP!

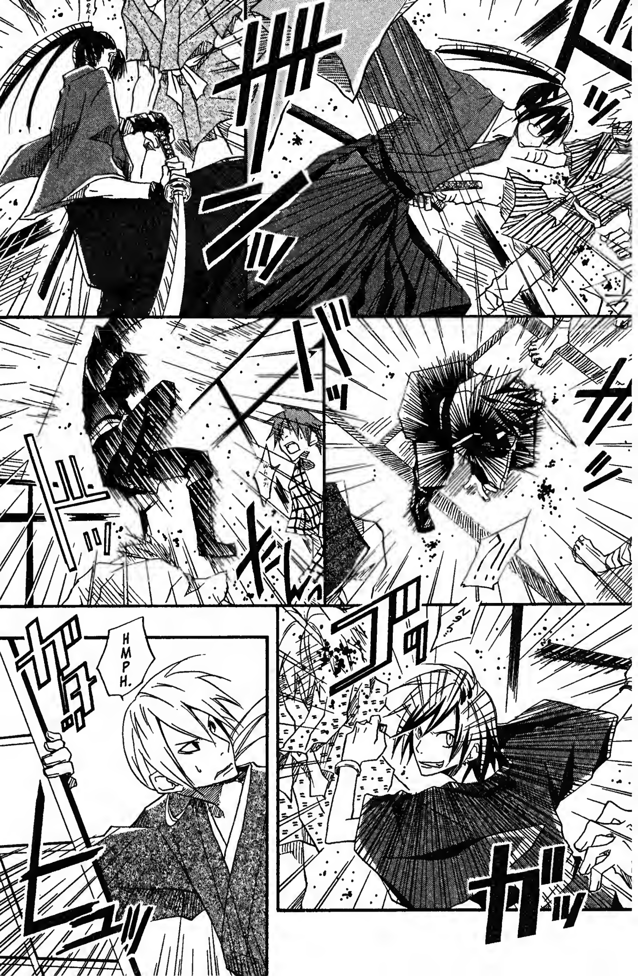

THANKS TO THIS, I GOT CALLED A TRANNY! PISSES ME OFF!
Right?!
I'M SURPRISED IT TOOK THIS LONG.
Lookit ya.
WE'RE BLOWN, HUH?
YEAH. SHOULDA EXPECTED IT. A PIMP KNOWS HIS GIRLS LIKE A COWBOY KNOWS HIS CATTLE.
THIS TSUBAKI TURNS GIRLS AND DEALS OPIUM AT BROTHELS ALL OVER THE TERRITORY!
I THINK THERE'S EVEN MORE TO HIM, BUT THAT'S ALL I GOT FOR NOW.
さっ
The girls' families haven't been paid.
さっ
Any parents that might have tried to make a fuss are...
AND HE IS WHERE?
さっ
Escaped to the inner rooms.

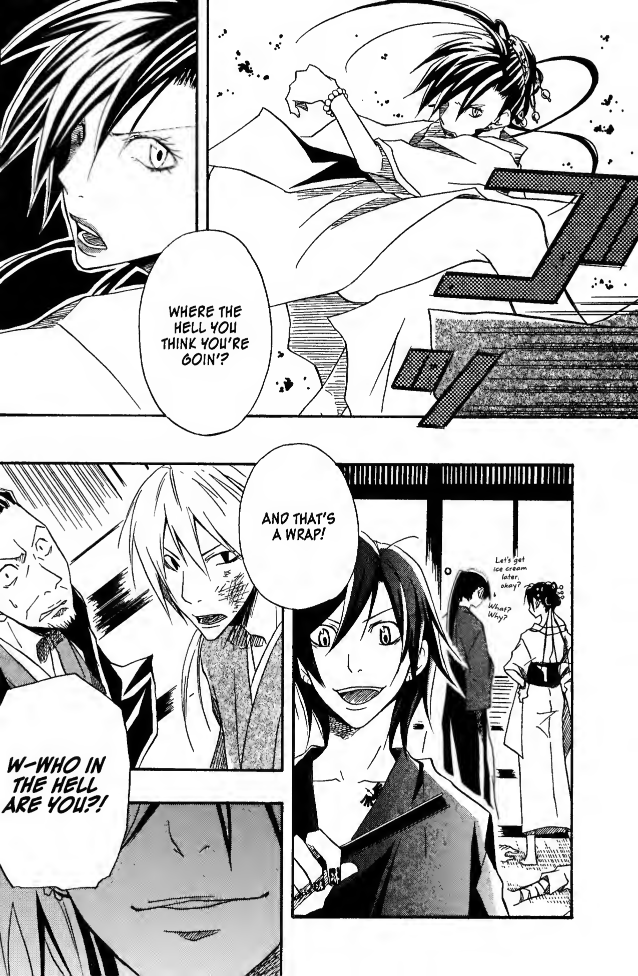

Argh!
THESE SIGNS ARE A PAIN IN THE ASS-- JUST TALK!
...dead.
SO... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
チャキッ
CRUSH THEM.
カタンッ
WHAT'S WRONG, TSUBAKI?
INUI-SAN, YOU NEED TO VET YOUR EMPLOYEES MORE THOROUGHLY.

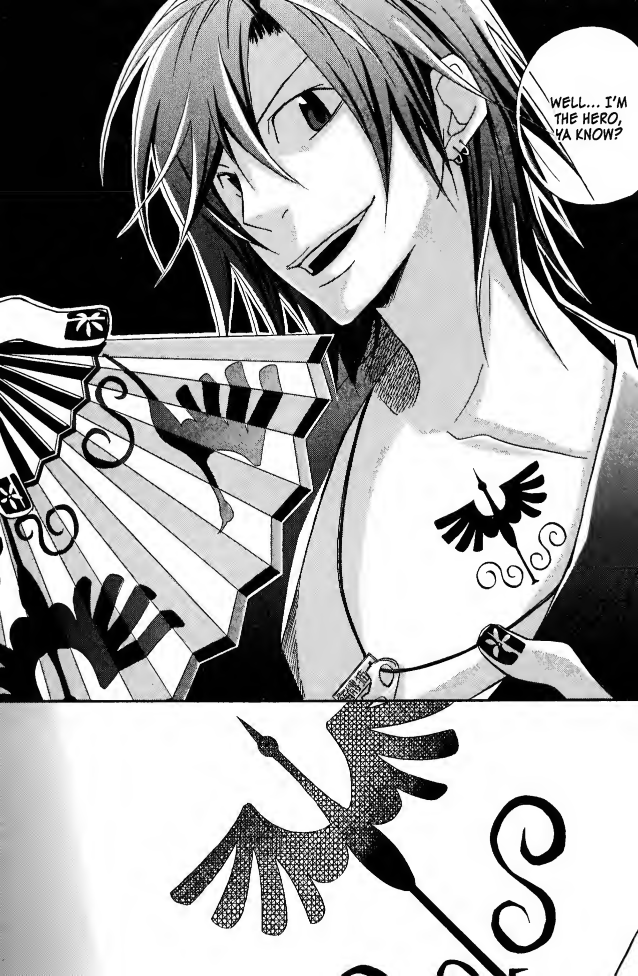

THERE ARE FOXES IN THE HEN HOUSE, I'M AFRAID.
FOXES IN THE...?
THANKS...
TSUBAKI, THE PIMP...
...AND...
...THE BROTHEL OWNER PIG.

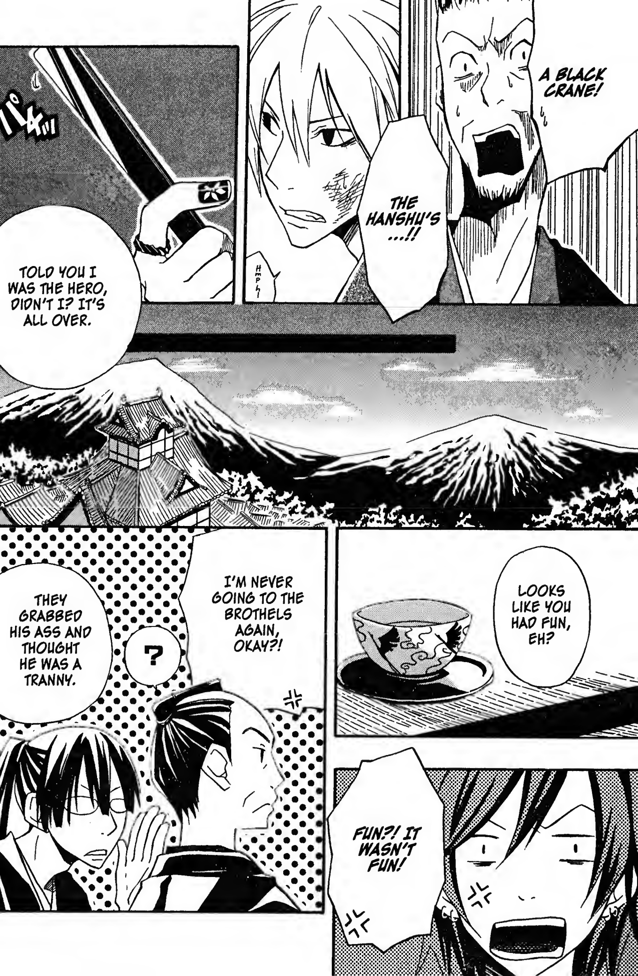

FOR HEINOUS CRIMES AGAINST YOUR OWN PEOPLE...
...YOU NOW STAND JUDGED...AND CONVICTED.
!!
OH, REALLY?
YOU'RE SOMETHING ELSE, AREN'T YOU?
BUT I TRULY DOUBT YOU'LL LEAVE HERE ALIVE.

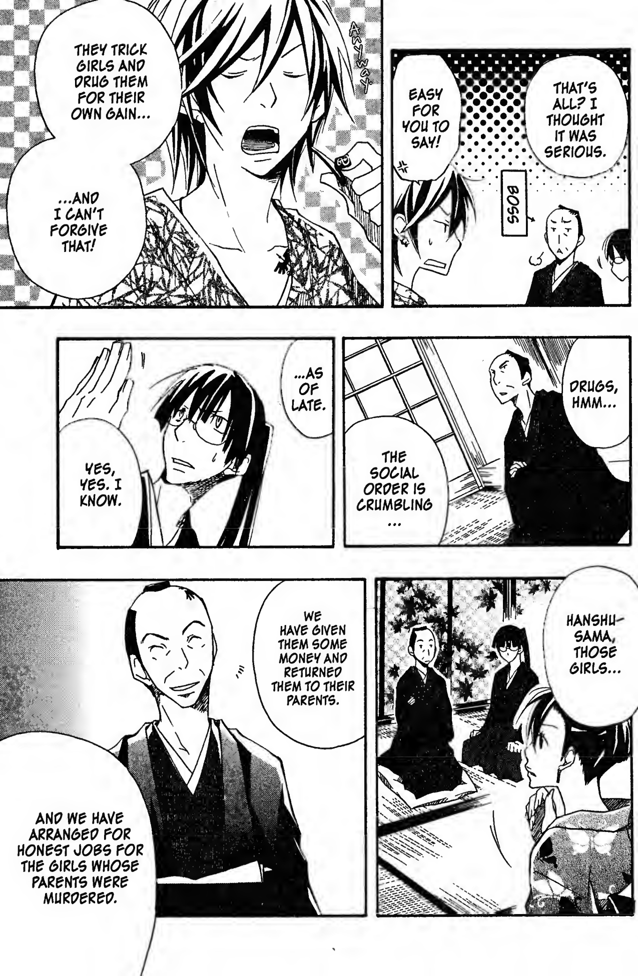

OKAY, MAYBE NOT...
GET THEM!!

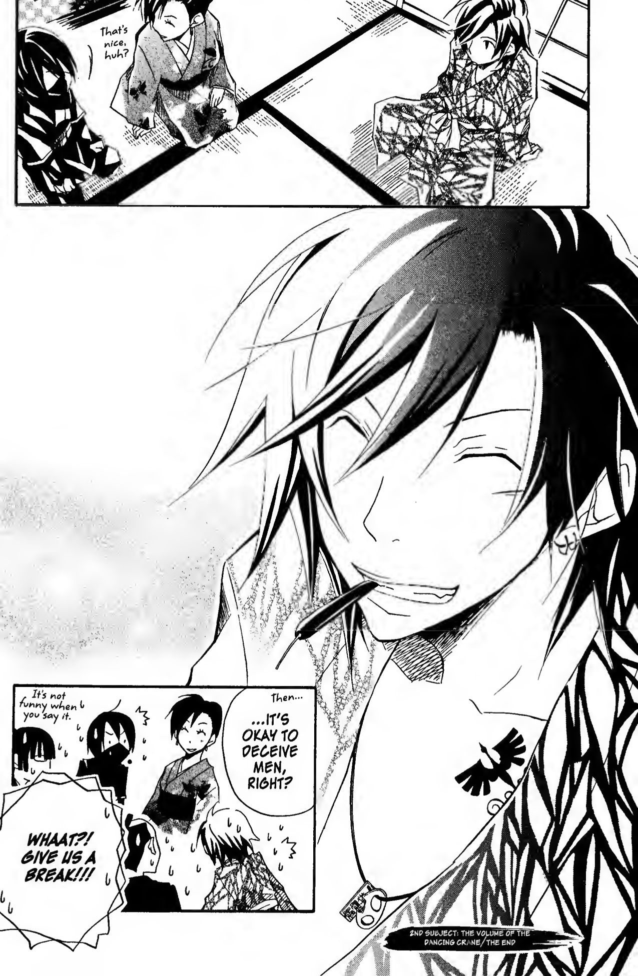

Wha?!
HMPH.
ガッ
ヒュッ


WHERE THE HELL YOU THINK YOU'RE GOIN'?
AND THAT'S A WRAP!
Let's get ice cream later, okay?
What? Why?
W-WHO IN THE HELL ARE YOU?!


WELL... I'M THE HERO, YA KNOW?


A BLACK CRANE!
THE HANSHU'S ...!!
Hmph!
パチッ
TOLD YOU I WAS THE HERO, DIDN'T I? IT'S ALL OVER.
LOOKS LIKE YOU HAD FUN, EH?
FUN?! IT WASN'T FUN!
I'M NEVER GOING TO THE BROTHELS AGAIN, OKAY?!
?
THEY GRABBED HIS ASS AND THOUGHT HE WAS A TRANNY.

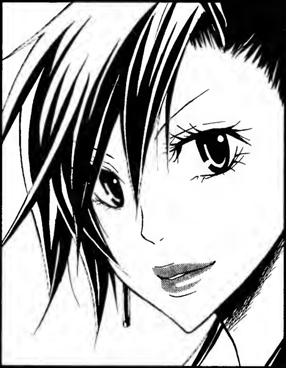

THEY TRICK GIRLS AND DRUG THEM FOR THEIR OWN GAIN...
...AND I CAN'T FORGIVE THAT!
Anyway
THAT'S ALL? I THOUGHT IT WAS SERIOUS.
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY!
BOSS
DRUGS, HMM...
THE SOCIAL ORDER IS CRUMBLING ...
...AS OF LATE.
YES, YES. I KNOW.
HANSHU-SAMA, THOSE GIRLS...
WE HAVE GIVEN THEM SOME MONEY AND RETURNED THEM TO THEIR PARENTS.
AND WE HAVE ARRANGED FOR HONEST JOBS FOR THE GIRLS WHOSE PARENTS WERE MURDERED.


That's nice, huh?
Then...
...IT'S OKAY TO DECEIVE MEN, RIGHT?
It's not funny when you say it.
WHAAT?! GIVE US A BREAK!!!

2ND SUBJECT: THE VOLUME OF THE DANCING CRANE/THE END

3RD SUBJECT:

THE VOLUME OF THE CRANE AND TURTLE



Thoughtful and Caring Big Sister Type with a Drop of Red

Mimasaka Ran

Born November 12th / 18 years old

Scorpio / Blood Type A

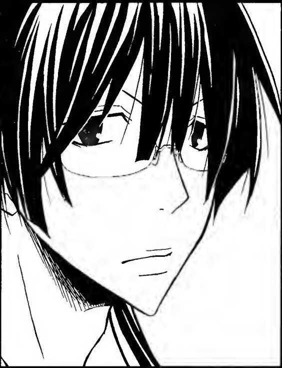
Favorite Food: Anmitsu

Hobbies: Playing Cards

Dislikes: All bugs

Specialties: She's tricky and good with the sleight of hand moves.

"Ran" refers to the color indigo, but her thematic color is purple. I also use a lot of butterflies. It's Mimasaka because that's the province next to Inaba. She's the only female character, so I put a lot of work into her.



Pessimist with Glasses

Inaba Ento

Born October 10th / 18 years old

Libra / Blood Type O

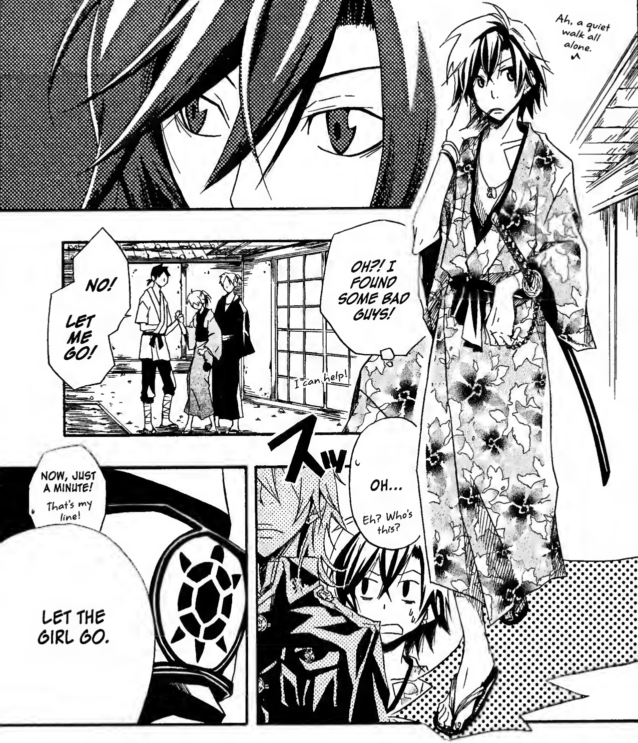
Favorite Food: Soba

Hobbies: Stand Up Comedy Fan

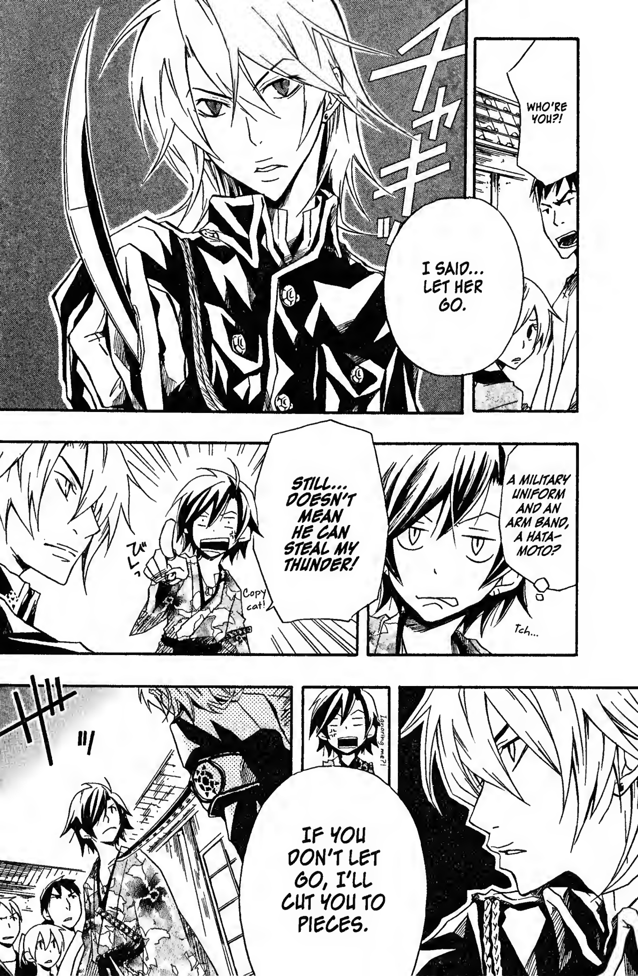
Dislikes: Freedom

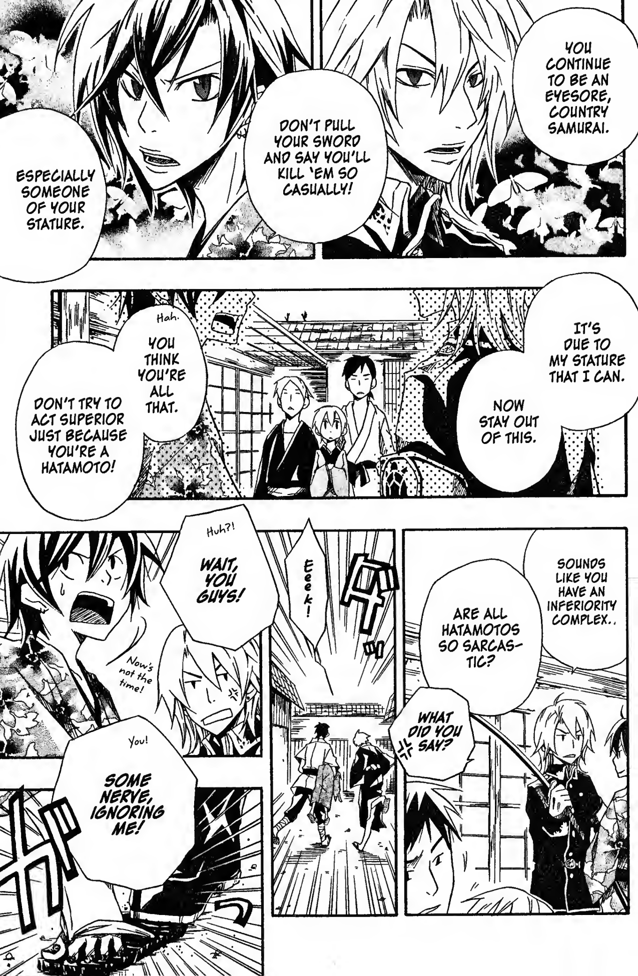
Specialties: Is liked by children

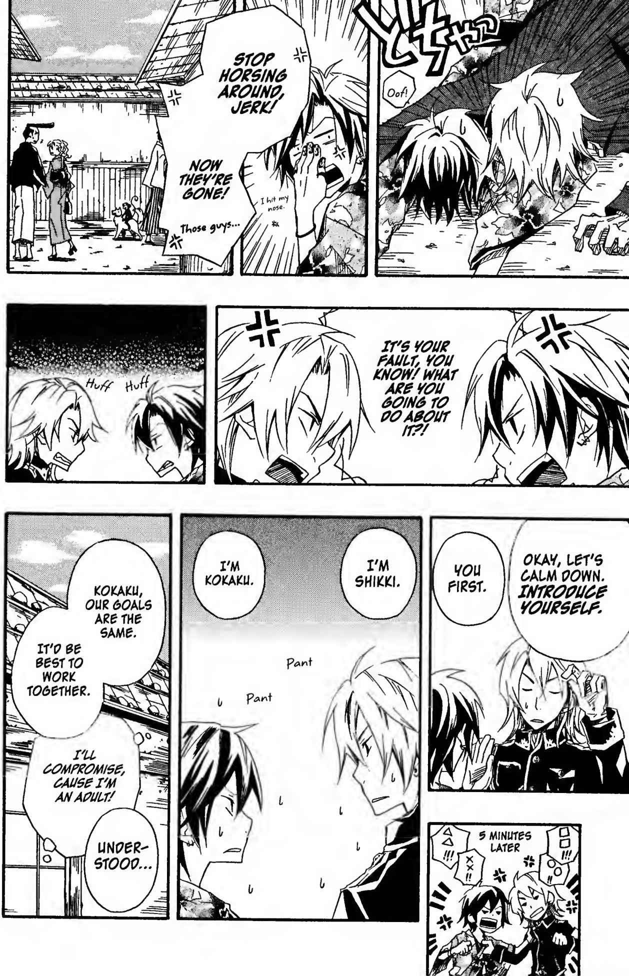
In the early stages, he didn't wear glasses but he got glasses because of an idea from someone above. His name is from the white rabbit, Inaba. His thematic color is a deep green.

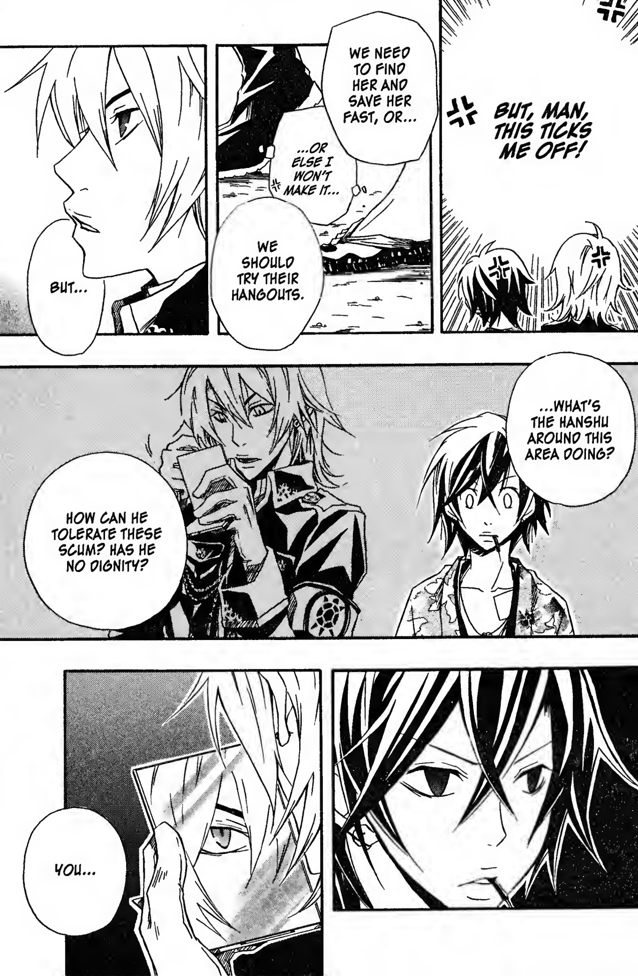

Ah, a quiet walk all alone.
OH?! I FOUND SOME BAD GUYS!
I can help!
NO! LET ME GO!
OH...
Eh? Who's this?
NOW, JUST A MINUTE!
That's my line!
LET THE GIRL GO.

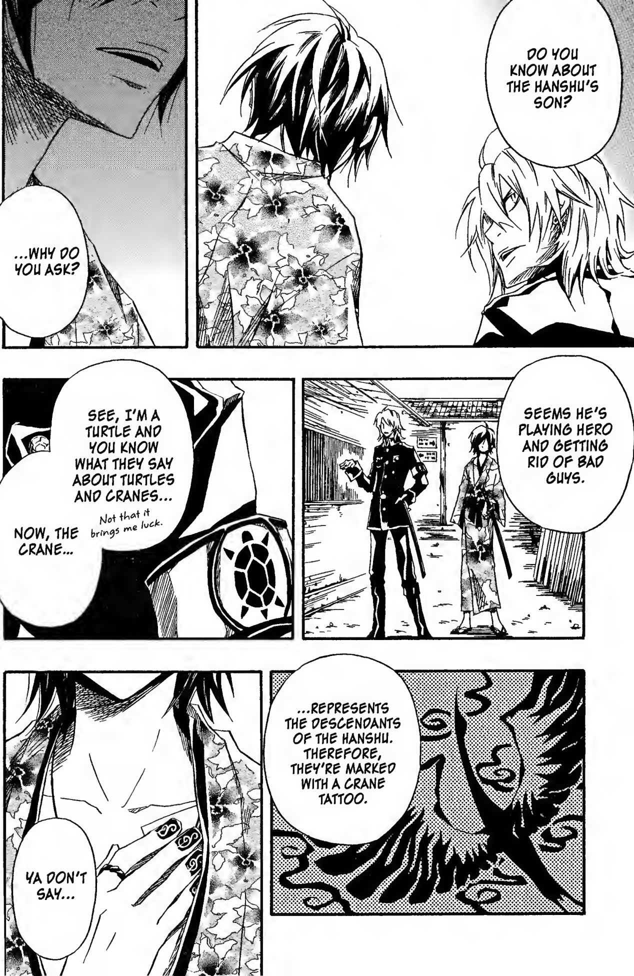
WHEN THIS WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE MAGAZINE, THERE WERE SOME PHRASES ADDED TO THE OPENING ILLUSTRATIONS (VIA THE EDITOR-SAMA'S HARD WORK!). FOR THE FIRST TOPIC IT WAS, "HIS MOUTH'S LOVER IS A PEPPER?!" FOR THE SECOND TOPIC IT WAS, "PEPPERS ARE THE SOURCE OF HIS STAMINA?" HE PUT THE WORD PEPPER IN EVERY TIME. FOR THE THIRD TOPIC IT WAS, "I DEFINITELY WON'T LOSE TO YOU!!" ...HUH? WHAT ABOUT THE PEPPERS? IT SEEMS UNTIL THE VERY END IT WAS ACTUALLY, "I WON'T GIVE YOU MY PEPPERS!!" I THOUGHT THAT WAS BETTER BECAUSE IT WAS STUPID (THESE ARE WORDS OF PRAISE). IT SEEMS MY EDITOR HAS GIVEN UP PUTTING "PEPPERS" IN. DON'T GIVE UP (LAUGHS)!

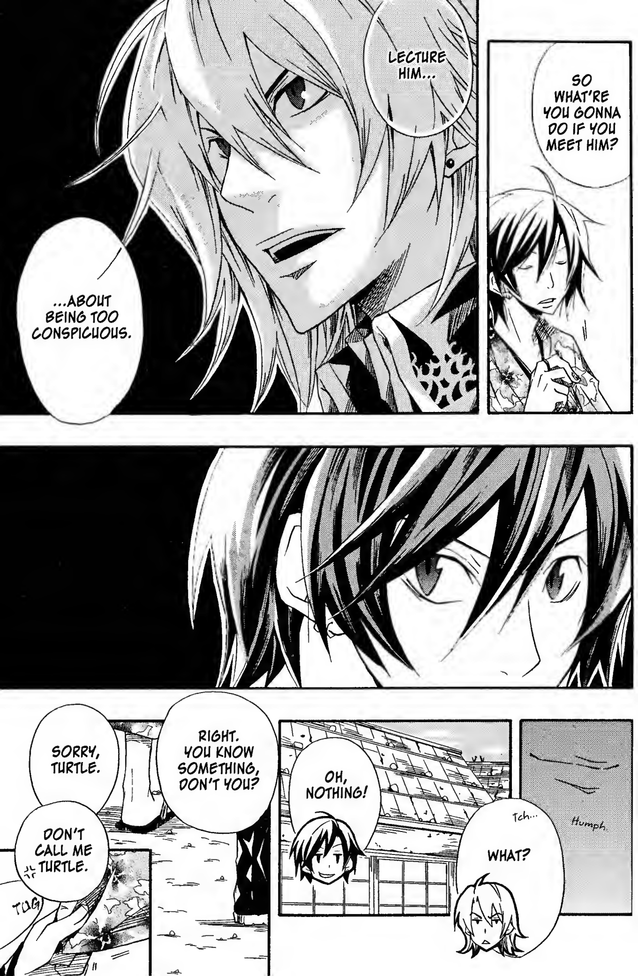

WHO'RE YOU?!
チャキッ
I SAID... LET HER GO.
A MILITARY UNIFORM AND AN ARM BAND, A HATA-MOTO?
Tch...
STILL... DOESN'T MEAN HE CAN STEAL MY THUNDER!
Copy cat!
びしっ
IF YOU DON'T LET GO, I'LL CUT YOU TO PIECES.
Ignoring me?!
ザッ

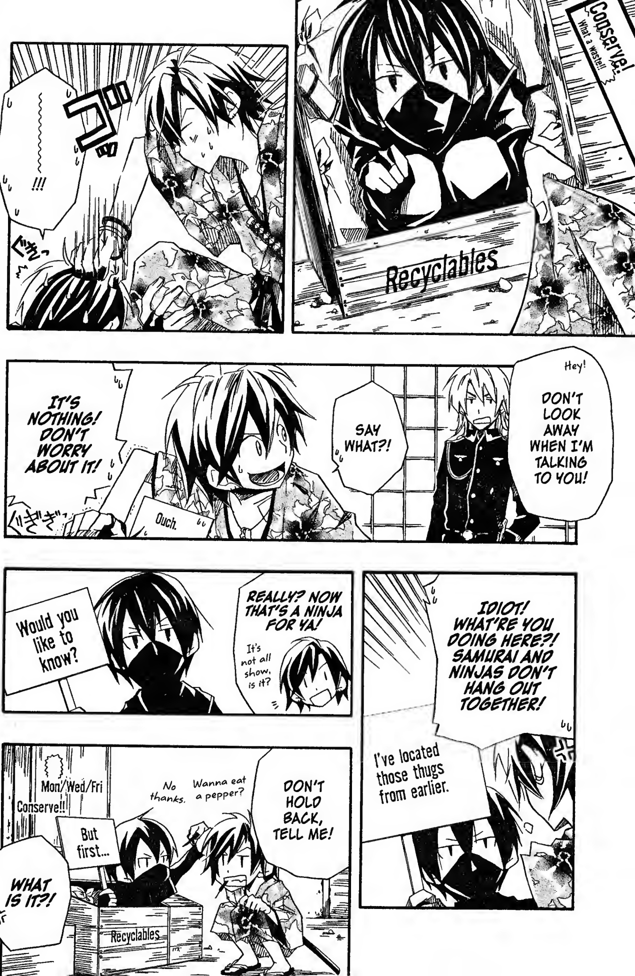

YOU CONTINUE TO BE AN EYESORE, COUNTRY SAMURAI.
DON'T PULL YOUR SWORD AND SAY YOU'LL KILL 'EM SO CASUALLY!
ESPECIALLY SOMEONE OF YOUR STATURE.
IT'S DUE TO MY STATURE THAT I CAN.
NOW STAY OUT OF THIS.
Hah.
YOU THINK YOU'RE ALL THAT.
DON'T TRY TO ACT SUPERIOR JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A HATAMOTO!
SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX..
ARE ALL HATAMOTOS SO SARCASTIC?
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
Eeek!
Huh?!
WAIT, YOU GUYS!
Now's not the time!
You!
SOME NERVE, IGNORING ME!

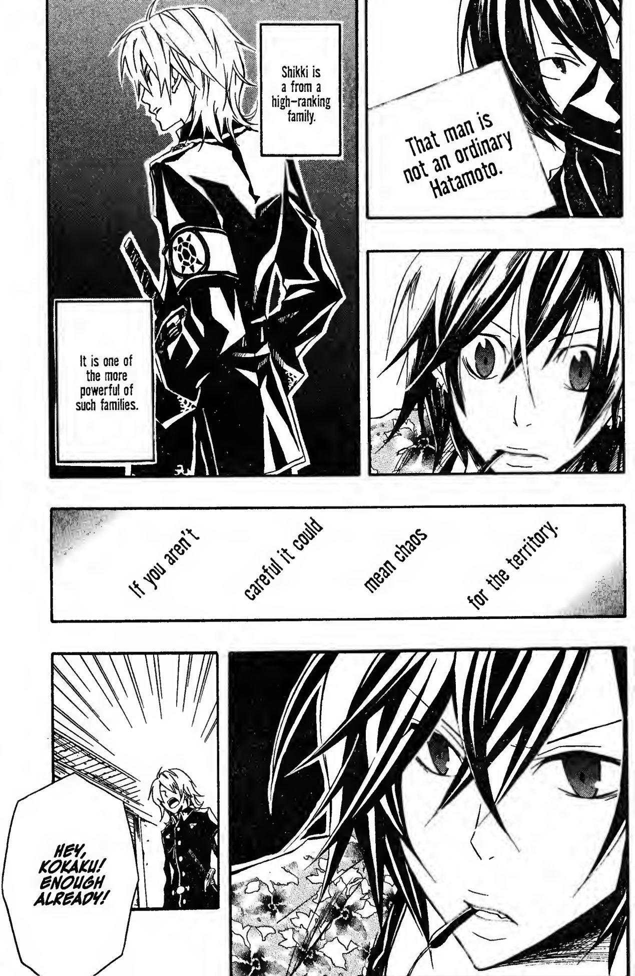

Oof!
STOP HORSING AROUND, JERK!
I hit my nose.
NOW THEY'RE GONE!
Those guys...
IT'S YOUR FAULT, YOU KNOW! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?!
Huff Huff
OKAY, LET'S CALM DOWN. INTRODUCE YOURSELF.
YOU FIRST.
I'M SHIKKI.
I'M KOKAKU.
Pant
Pant
KOKAKU, OUR GOALS ARE THE SAME.
IT'D BE BEST TO WORK TOGETHER.
I'LL COMPROMISE, CAUSE I'M AN ADULT!
UNDER-STOOD...
5 MINUTES LATER

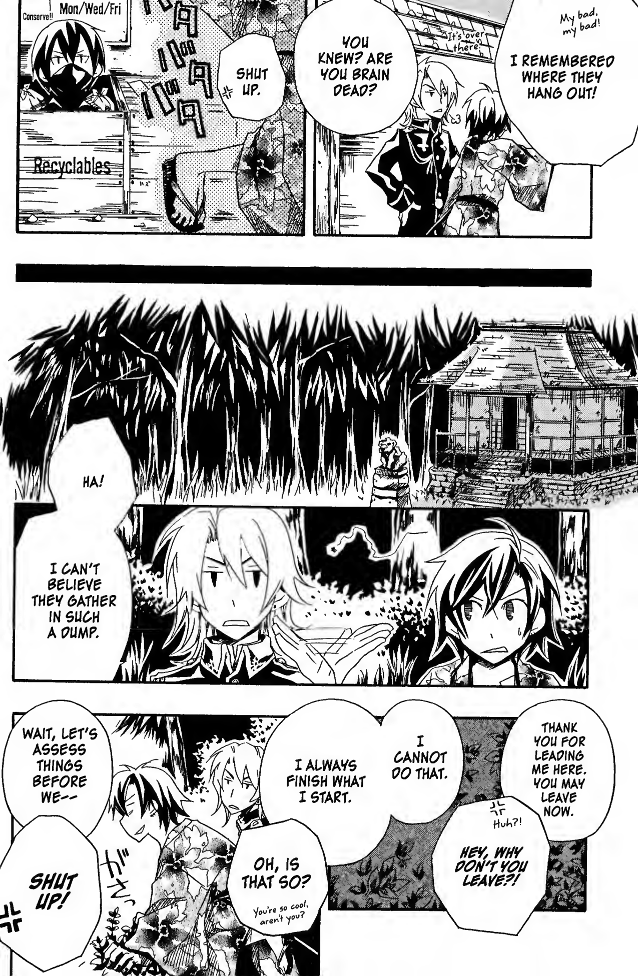

BUT, MAN, THIS TICKS ME OFF!
WE NEED TO FIND HER AND SAVE HER FAST, OR...
...OR ELSE I WON'T MAKE IT...
WE SHOULD TRY THEIR HANGOUTS.
BUT...
...WHAT'S THE HANSHU AROUND THIS AREA DOING?
HOW CAN HE TOLERATE THESE SCUM? HAS HE NO DIGNITY?
YOU...

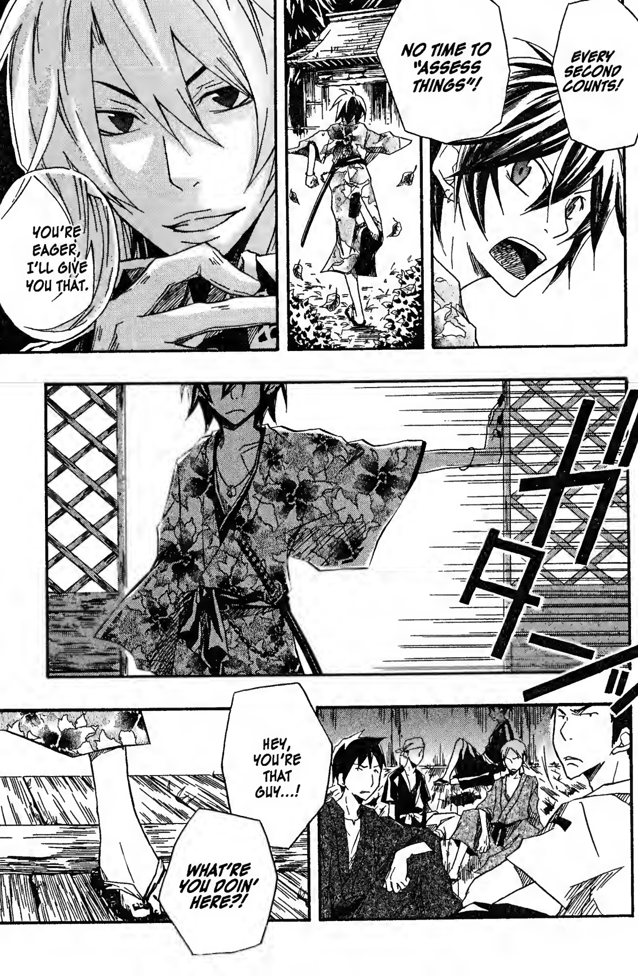

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE HANSHU'S SON?
...WHY DO YOU ASK?
SEEMS HE'S PLAYING HERO AND GETTING RID OF BAD GUYS.
SEE, I'M A TURTLE AND YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT TURTLES AND CRANES...
Not that it brings me luck.
NOW, THE CRANE...
...REPRESENTS THE DESCENDANTS OF THE HANSHU. THEREFORE, THEY'RE MARKED WITH A CRANE TATTOO.
YA DON'T SAY...

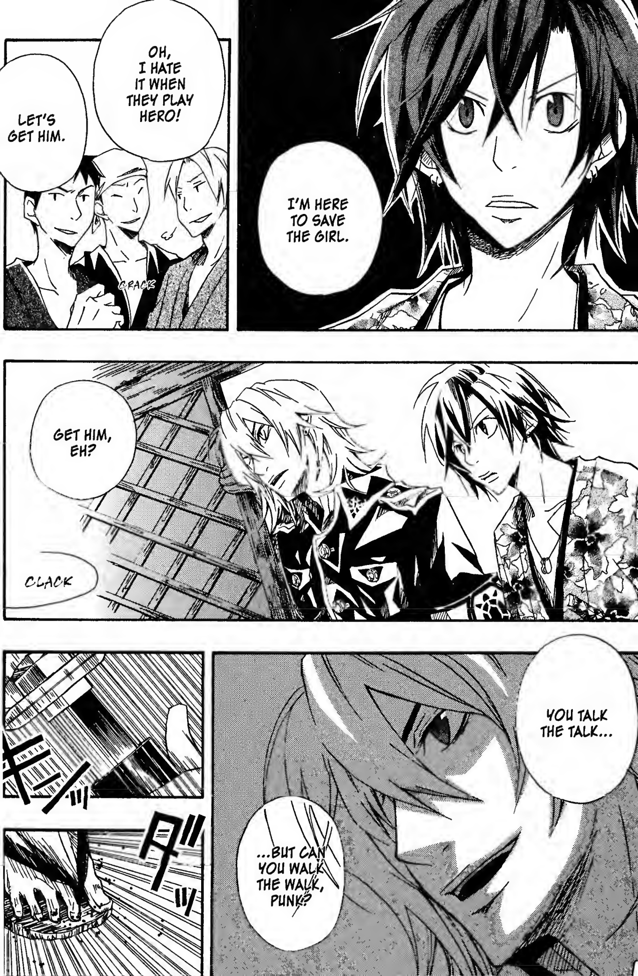

SO WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO IF YOU MEET HIM?
LECTURE HIM...
...ABOUT BEING TOO CONSPICUOUS.
Humph.
Tch...
WHAT?
OH, NOTHING!
RIGHT. YOU KNOW SOMETHING, DON'T YOU?
SORRY, TURTLE.
DON'T CALL ME TURTLE.
TUG

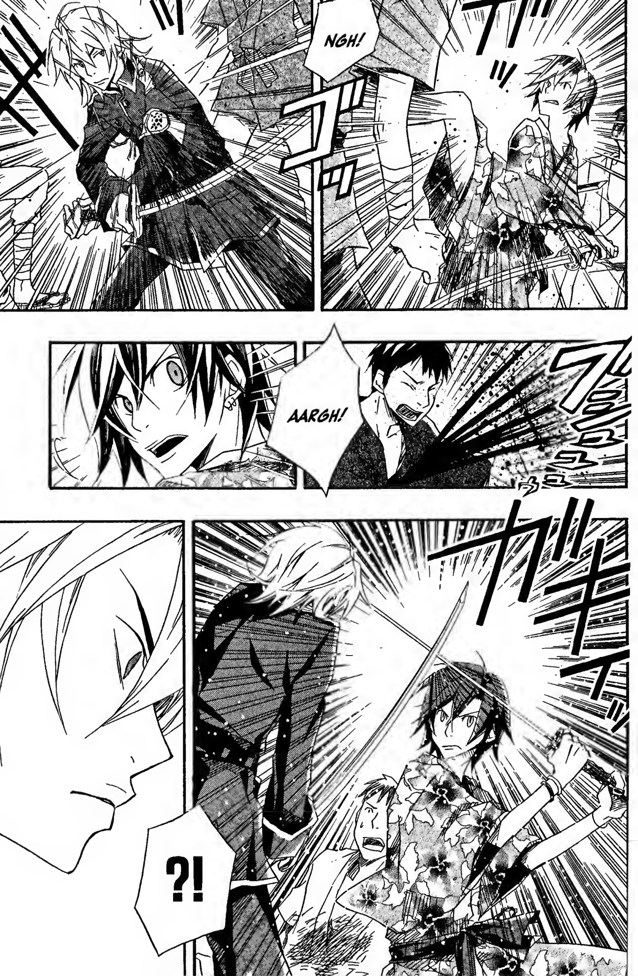

Conserve!
What a waste!!
Recyclables
ゴッ
~~~~~~~~!!!
ぐきっ
Hey!
DON'T LOOK AWAY WHEN I'M TALKING TO YOU!
SAY WHAT?!
IT'S NOTHING! DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
Ouch.
ぐぎぎっ
IDIOT! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?! SAMURAI AND NINJAS DON'T HANG OUT TOGETHER!
I've located those thugs from earlier.
REALLY? NOW THAT'S A NINJA FOR YA!
It's not all show, is it?
Would you like to know?
DON'T HOLD BACK, TELL ME!
Wanna eat a pepper?
No thanks.
Mon/Wed/Fri
Conserve!!
But first...
WHAT IS IT?!
Recyclables
~~~~~~~~

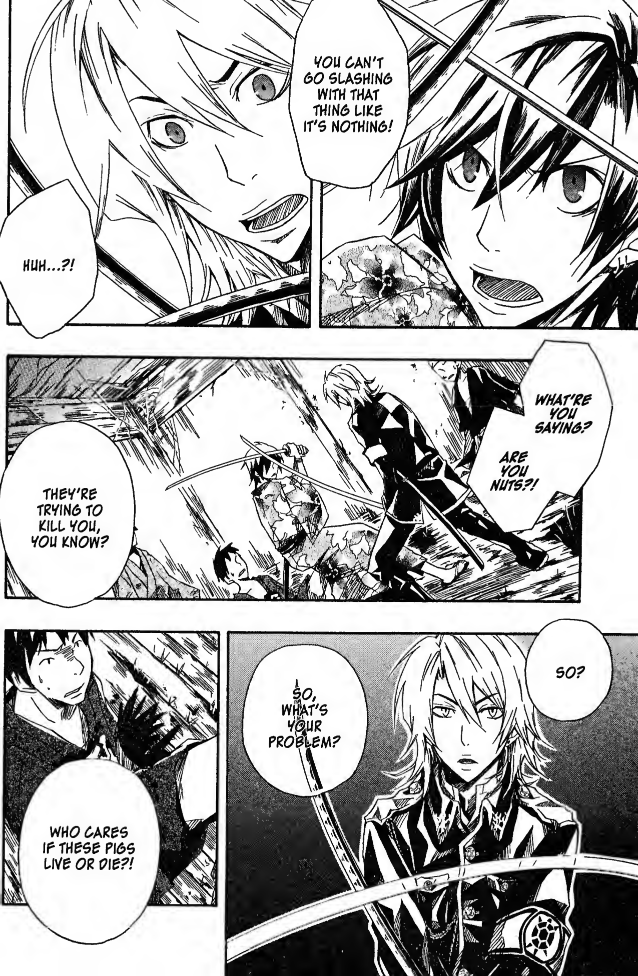

That man is not an ordinary Hatamoto.
Shikki is a from a high-ranking family.
It is one of the more powerful of such families.
If you aren't careful it could mean chaos for the territory.
HEY, KOKAKU! ENOUGH ALREADY!

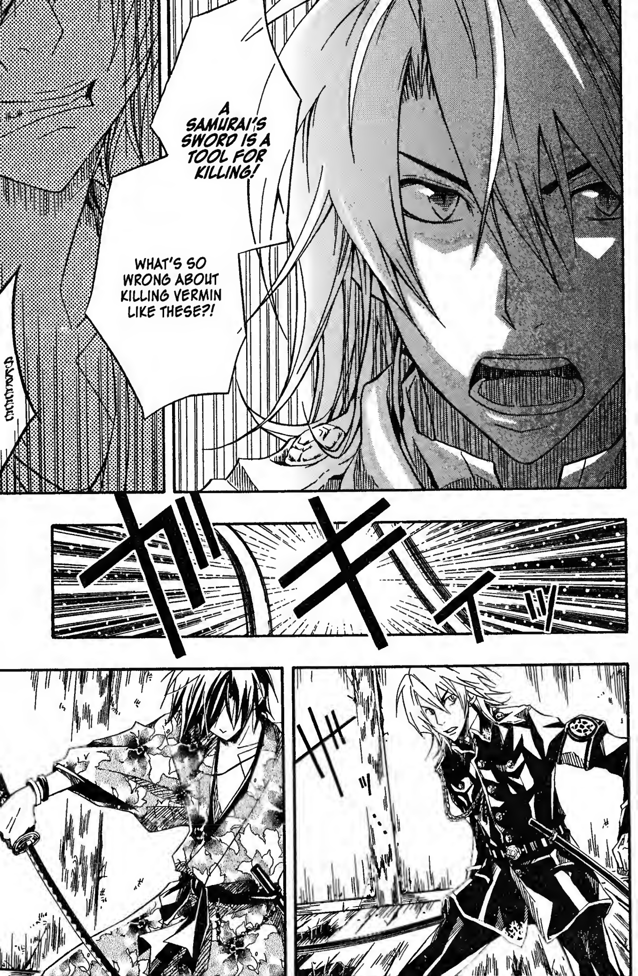

My bad, my bad!
I REMEMBERED WHERE THEY HANG OUT!
It's over there.
YOU KNEW? ARE YOU BRAIN DEAD?
SHUT UP.
Mon/Wed/Fri
Conserve!!
Recyclables
HA!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY GATHER IN SUCH A DUMP.
THANK YOU FOR LEADING ME HERE. YOU MAY LEAVE NOW.
Huh?!
HEY, WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE?!
I CANNOT DO THAT.
I ALWAYS FINISH WHAT I START.
OH, IS THAT SO?
You're so cool, aren't you?
WAIT, LET'S ASSESS THINGS BEFORE WE--
SHUT UP!

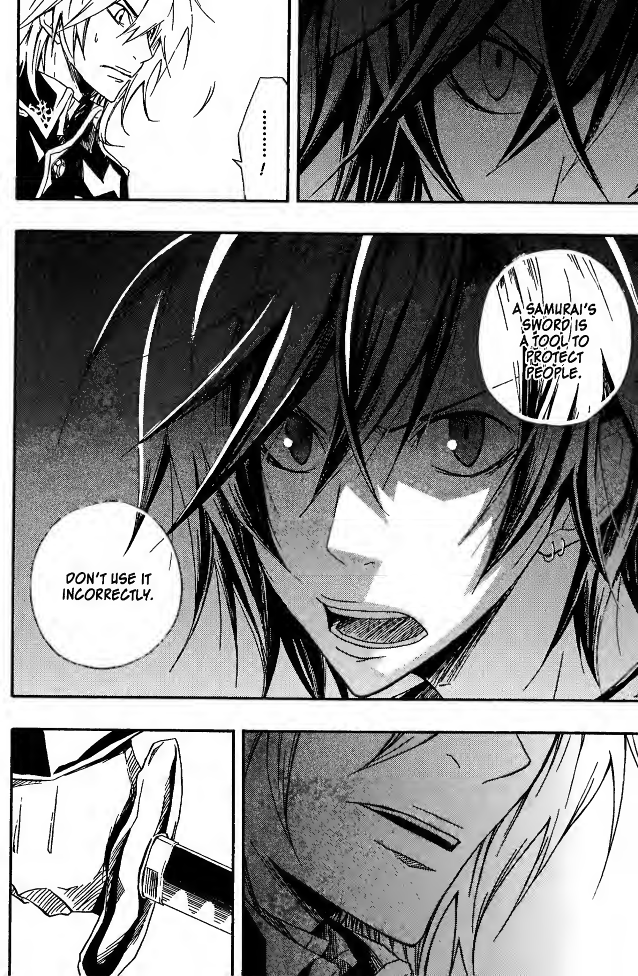

EVERY SECOND COUNTS!
NO TIME TO "ASSESS THINGS"!
YOU'RE EAGER, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
HEY, YOU'RE THAT GUY...!
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' HERE?!

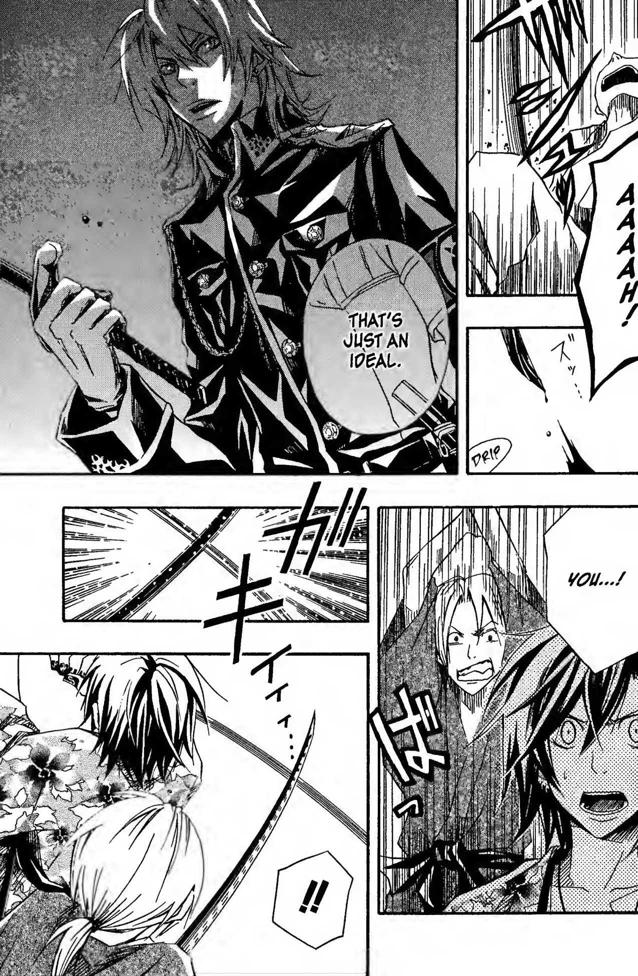

I'M HERE TO SAVE THE GIRL.
OH, I HATE IT WHEN THEY PLAY HERO!
LET'S GET HIM.
CRACK
GET HIM, EH?
CLACK
YOU TALK THE TALK...
...BUT CAN YOU WALK THE WALK, PUNK?

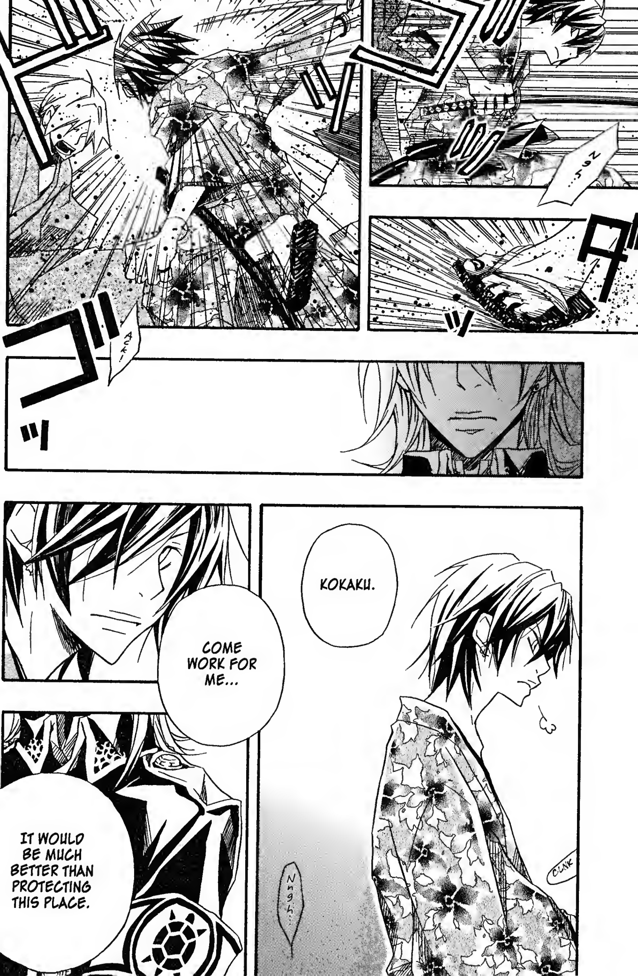

NGH!
AARGH!
?!

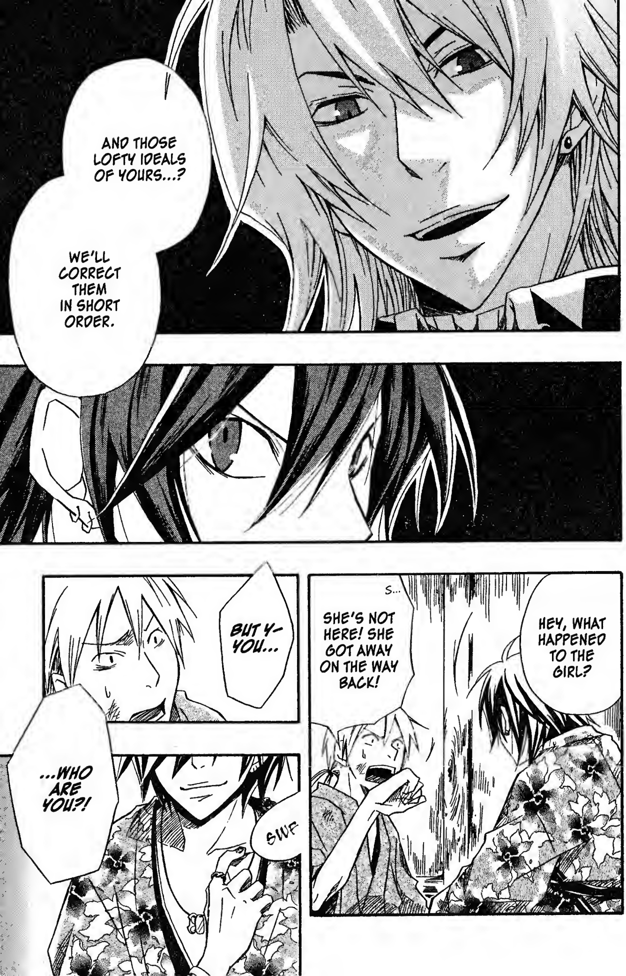

YOU CAN'T GO SLASHING WITH THAT THING LIKE IT'S NOTHING!
HUH...?!
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?
ARE YOU NUTS?!
THEY'RE TRYING TO KILL YOU, YOU KNOW?
SO?
SO, WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?
WHO CARES IF THESE PIGS LIVE OR DIE?!

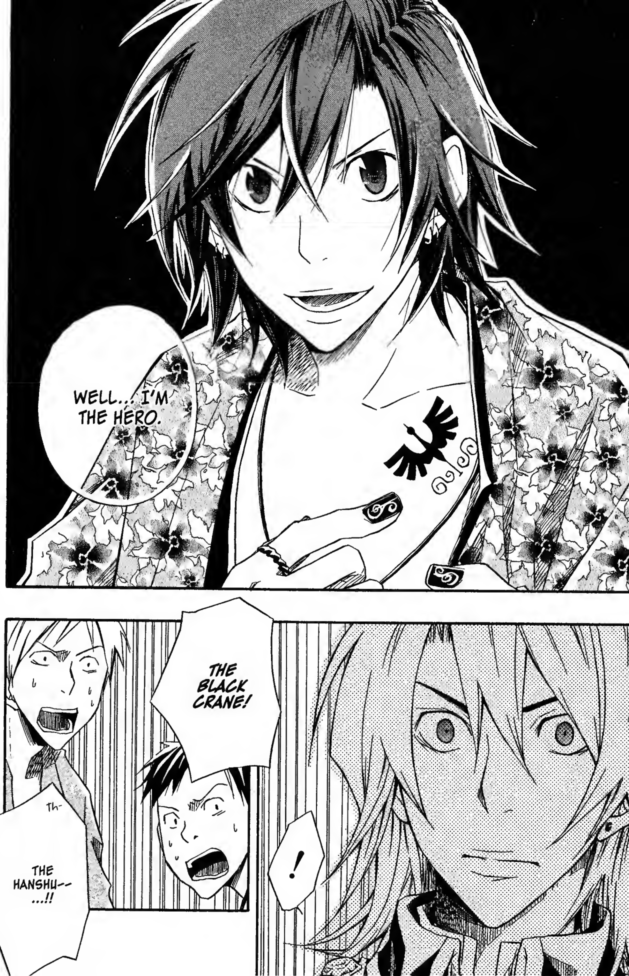

A SAMURAI'S SWORD IS A TOOL FOR KILLING!
WHAT'S SO WRONG ABOUT KILLING VERMIN LIKE THESE?!
SKREEE
ガキィッ
ザッ

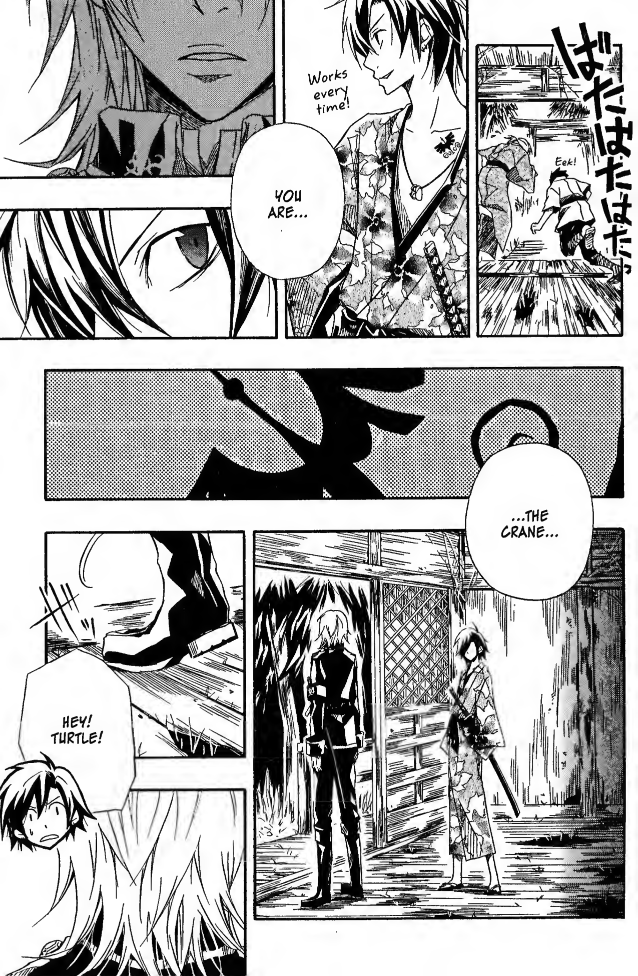

......!
A SAMURAI'S SWORD IS A TOOL TO PROTECT PEOPLE.
DON'T USE IT INCORRECTLY.

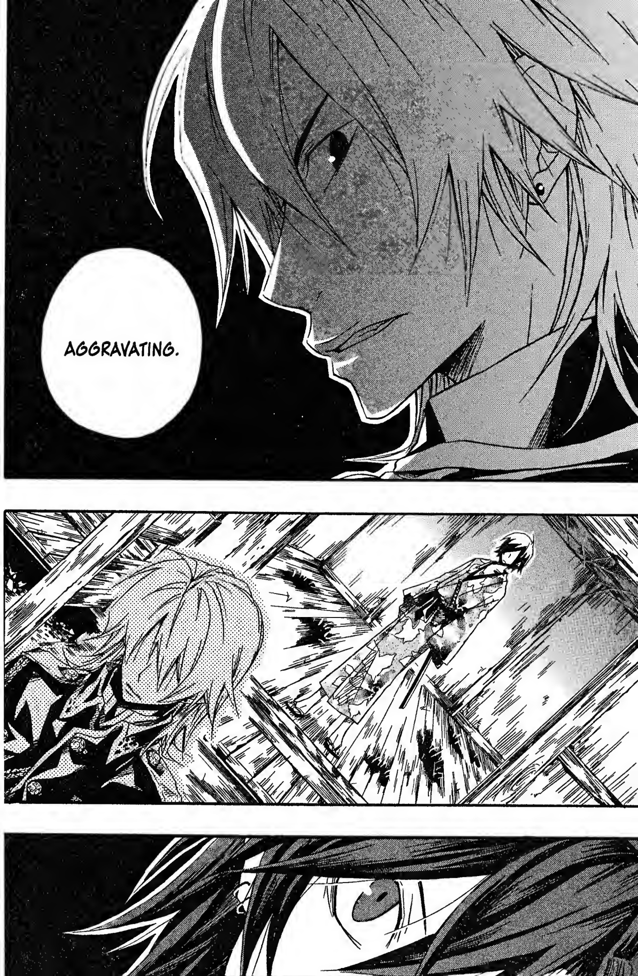

AAAAAH!
ズッ…
DRIP
THAT'S JUST AN IDEAL.
YOU...!
ボッ
ガキイィィ…
!!

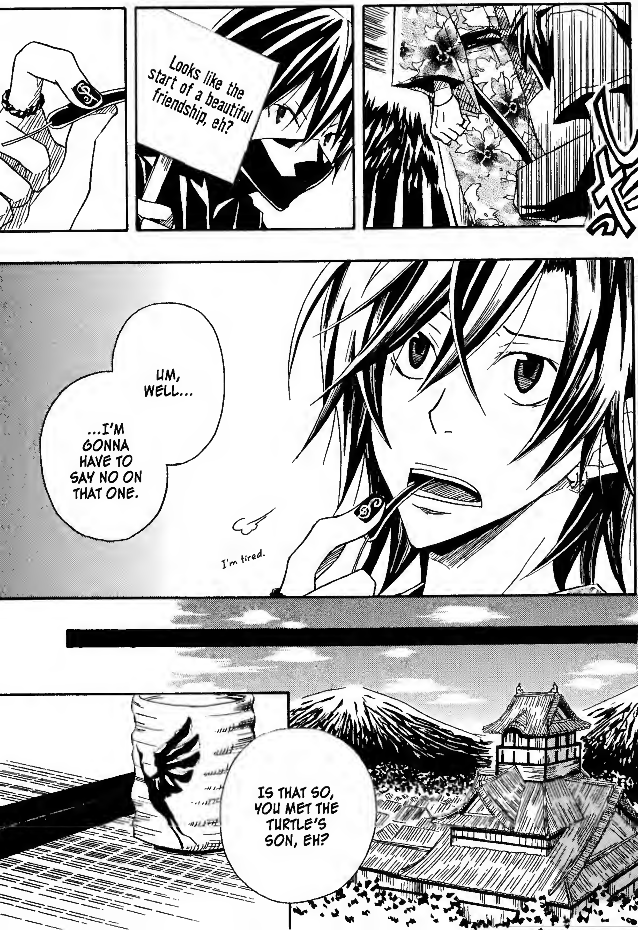

Nngh...
Ack!
KOKAKU.
COME WORK FOR ME...
IT WOULD BE MUCH BETTER THAN PROTECTING THIS PLACE.
Nngh...
CLNK

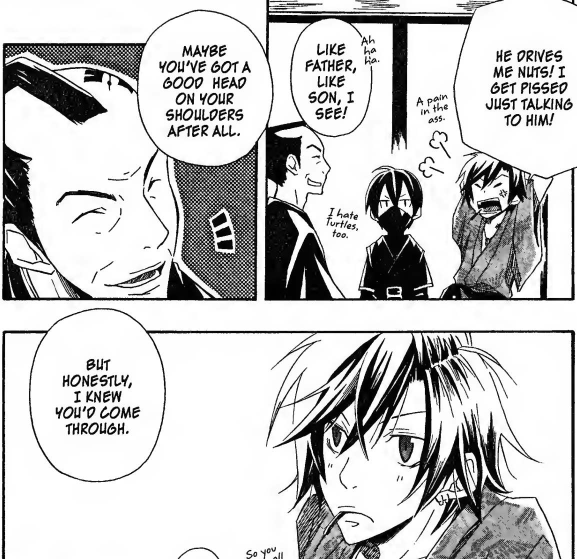

AND THOSE LOFTY IDEALS OF YOURS...?
WE'LL CORRECT THEM IN SHORT ORDER.
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GIRL?
S...
SHE'S NOT HERE! SHE GOT AWAY ON THE WAY BACK!
BUT Y-YOU...
...WHO ARE YOU?!
SWF


WELL... I'M THE HERO.
THE BLACK CRANE!
!
Th-
THE HANSHU-- ...!!


ばたばたばたっ
Eek!
Works every time!
YOU ARE...
...THE CRANE...
HEY! TURTLE!

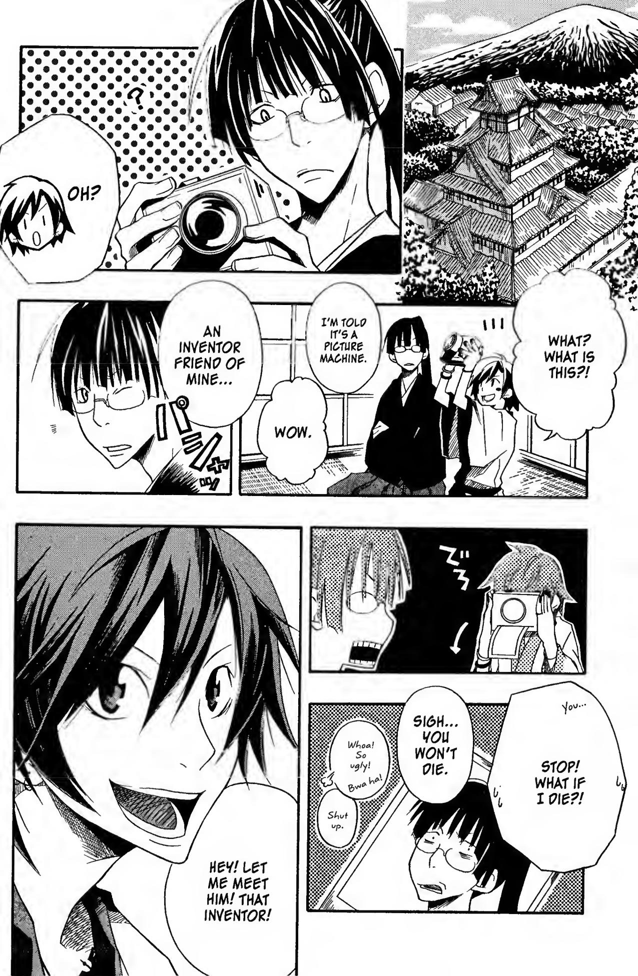

AGGRAVATING.

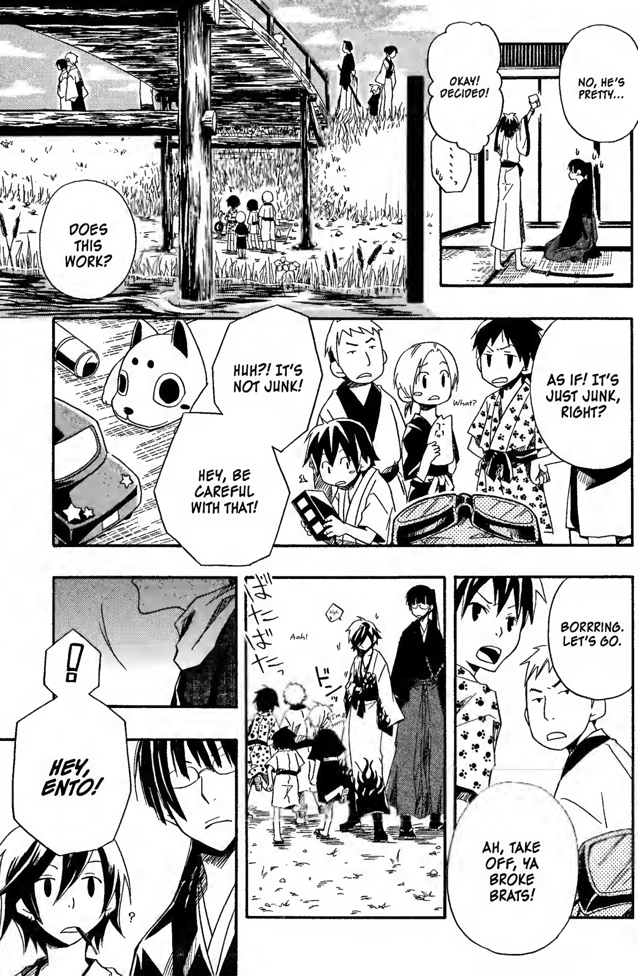

Looks like the start of a beautiful friendship, eh?
UM, WELL...
...I'M GONNA HAVE TO SAY NO ON THAT ONE.
I'm tired.
IS THAT SO, YOU MET THE TURTLE'S SON, EH?

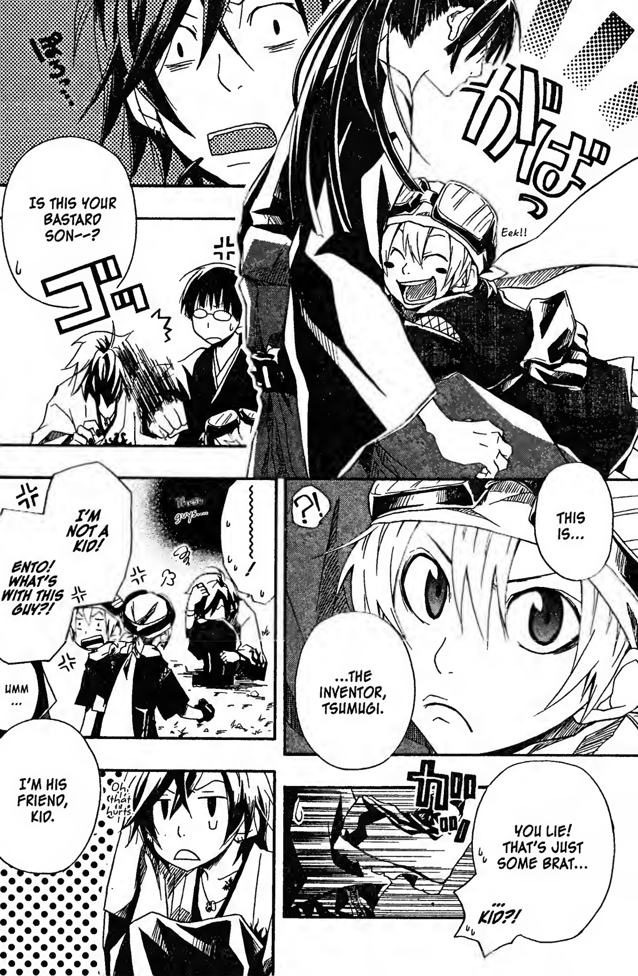

HE DRIVES ME NUTS! I GET PISSED JUST TALKING TO HIM!
A pain in the ass.
Ah ha ha.
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON, I SEE!
I hate turtles, too.
MAYBE YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS AFTER ALL.
So you knew all about it.
HM.
BUT HONESTLY, I KNEW YOU'D COME THROUGH.
Oh, yes.
SOME RUFFIANS HAVE BEEN MOLESTING YOUNG GIRLS AS OF LATE.
I ARRESTED THEM TODAY.
WHAT?! NO FAIR!
Damn.
NO FAIR, YOU SAY...

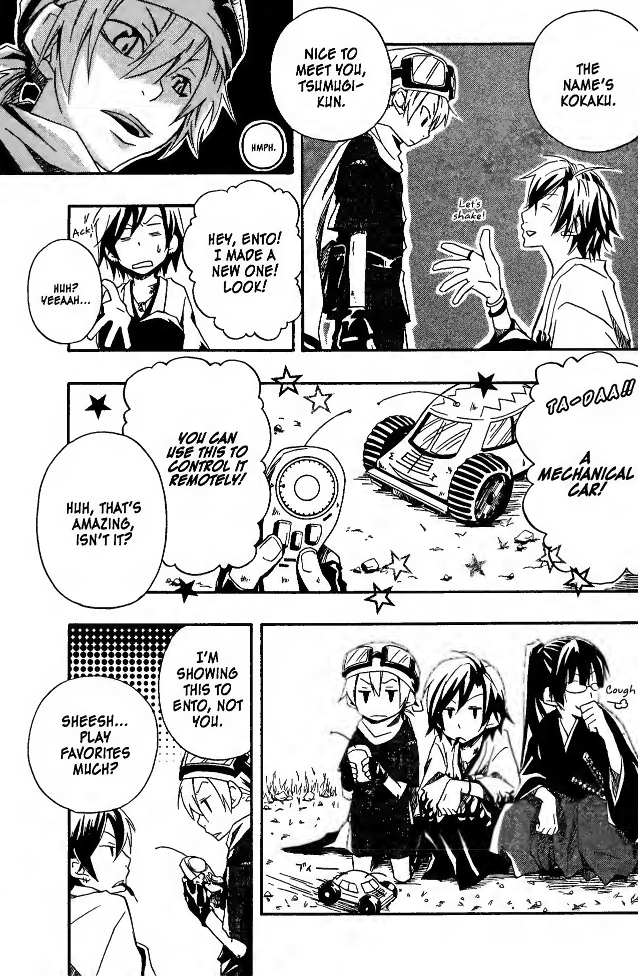
3RD SUBJECT: THE VOLUME OF THE CRANE AND TURTLE/THE END

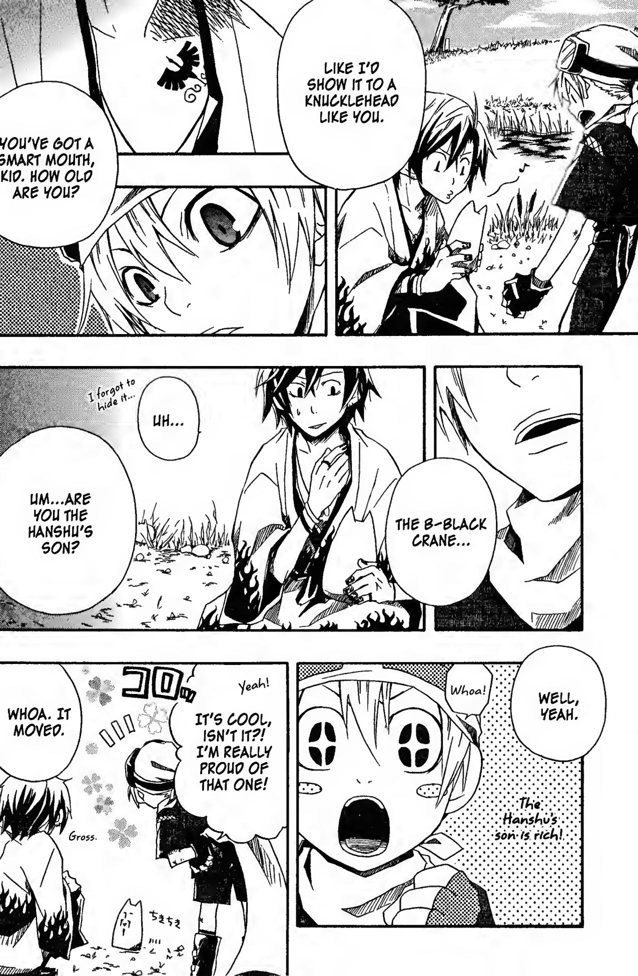
4TH SUBJECT:
THE VOLUME OF THE UNEMPLOYED

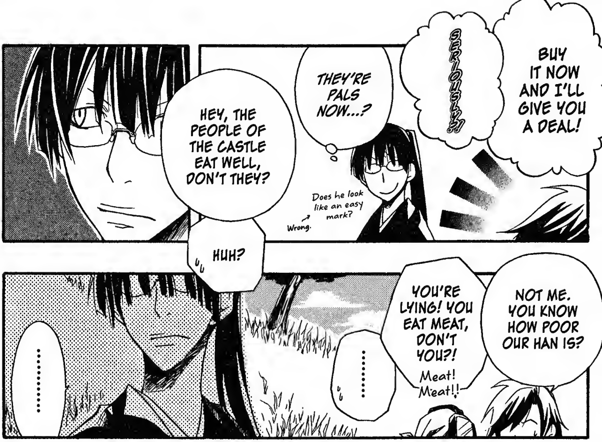

?
OH?
WHAT? WHAT IS THIS?!
I'M TOLD IT'S A PICTURE MACHINE.
WOW.
AN INVENTOR FRIEND OF MINE...
You...
STOP! WHAT IF I DIE?!
SIGH... YOU WON'T DIE.
Whoa! So ugly! Bwa ha!
Shut up.
HEY! LET ME MEET HIM! THAT INVENTOR!

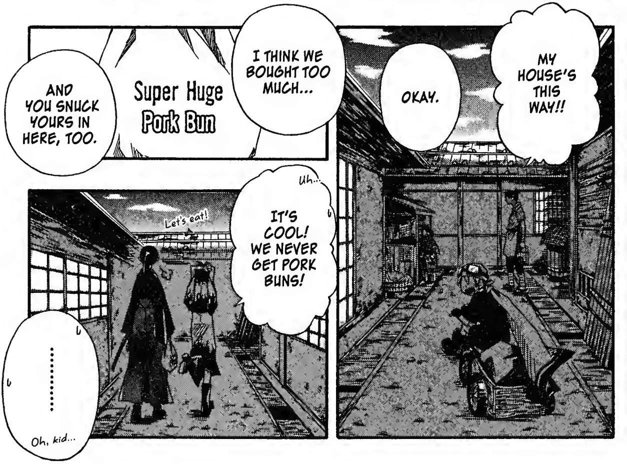

NO, HE'S PRETTY...
OKAY! DECIDED!
...
DOES THIS WORK?
AS IF! IT'S JUST JUNK, RIGHT?
What?
HUH?! IT'S NOT JUNK!
HEY, BE CAREFUL WITH THAT!
BORRRING. LET'S GO.
AH, TAKE OFF, YA BROKE BRATS!
Ngh
Aah!
I'm sorry
ばたばたっ
ドンッ
!
HEY, ENTO!
?

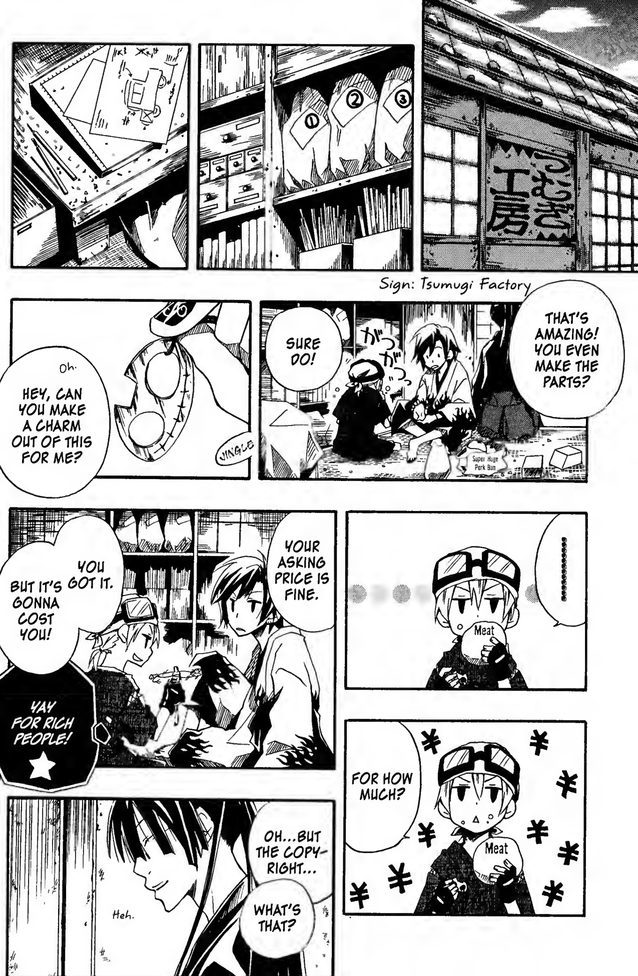

がばっ
Eek!!
ぽろっ…
IS THIS YOUR BASTARD SON--?
ゴッ
?!
THIS IS...
...THE INVENTOR, TSUMUGI.
~~~~~~!
These guys....
I'M NOT A KID!
ENTO! WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY?!
UMM ...
カッ
YOU LIE! THAT'S JUST SOME BRAT...
...KID?!
I'M HIS FRIEND, KID.
Oh, that hurts.
~~~~~~

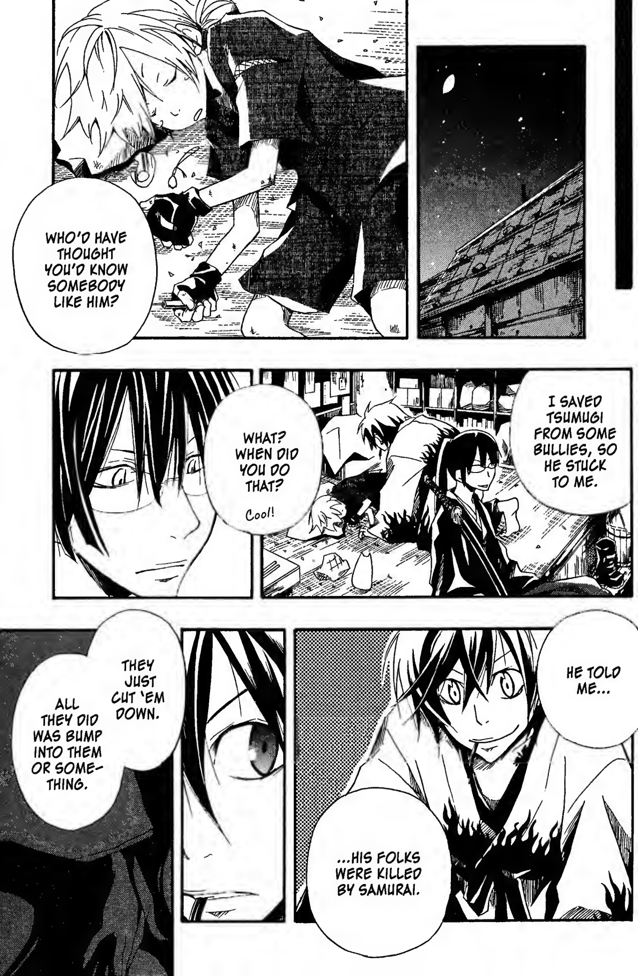

THE NAME'S KOKAKU.
Let's shake!
NICE TO MEET YOU, TSUMUGI-KUN.
HMPH.
HEY, ENTO! I MADE A NEW ONE! LOOK!
Ack!
HUH? YEEAAH...
TA-DAA!!
A MECHANICAL CAR!
YOU CAN USE THIS TO CONTROL IT REMOTELY!
HUH, THAT'S AMAZING, ISN'T IT?
Cough
ブィ—
I'M SHOWING THIS TO ENTO, NOT YOU.
SHEESH... PLAY FAVORITES MUCH?

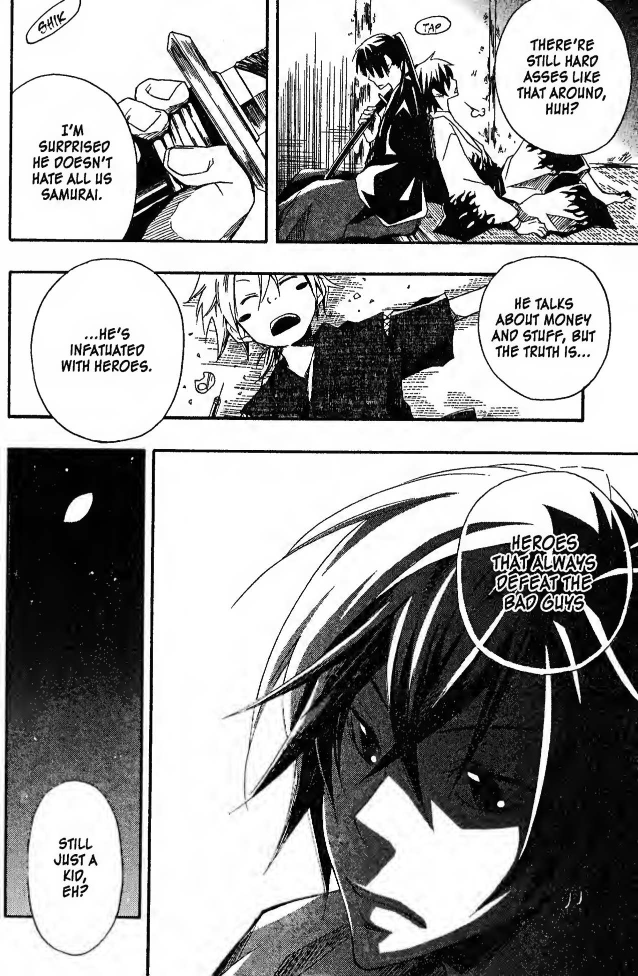

LIKE I'D SHOW IT TO A KNUCKLEHEAD LIKE YOU.
YOU'VE GOT A SMART MOUTH, KID. HOW OLD ARE YOU?
THE B-BLACK CRANE...
UH...
I forgot to hide it...
UM...ARE YOU THE HANSHU'S SON?
Whoa!
WELL, YEAH.
The Hanshu's son is rich!
Yeah!
IT'S COOL, ISN'T IT?! I'M REALLY PROUD OF THAT ONE!
コロッ
WHOA. IT MOVED.
Gross.
ちまちき

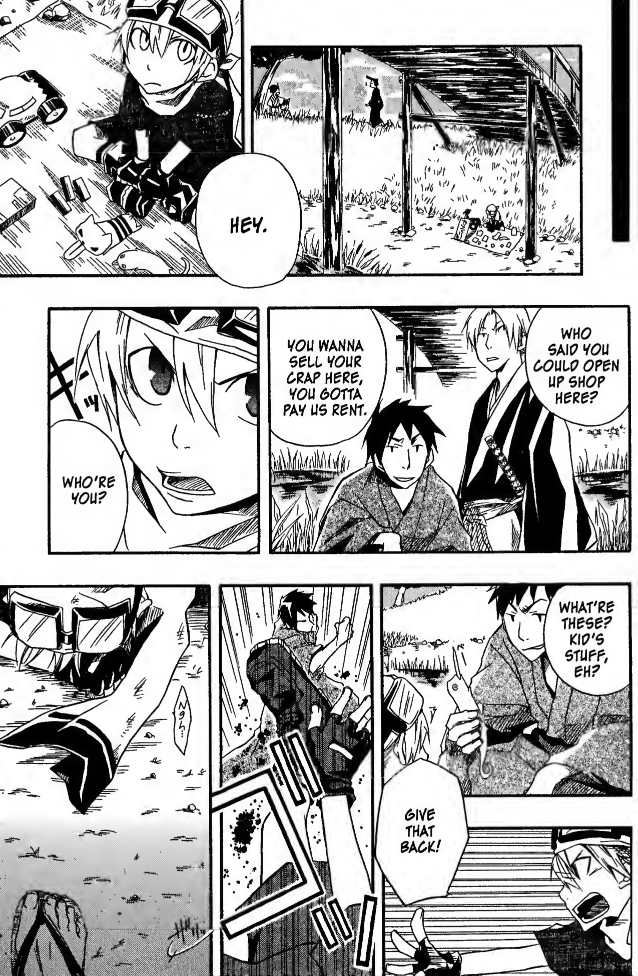

BUY IT NOW AND I'LL GIVE YOU A DEAL!
SERIOUSLY?!
THEY'RE PALS NOW...?
Does he look like an easy mark?
Wrong.
HEY, THE PEOPLE OF THE CASTLE EAT WELL, DON'T THEY?
HUH?
NOT ME. YOU KNOW HOW POOR OUR HAN IS?
YOU'RE LYING! YOU EAT MEAT, DON'T YOU?!
Meat! Meat!!
....
....

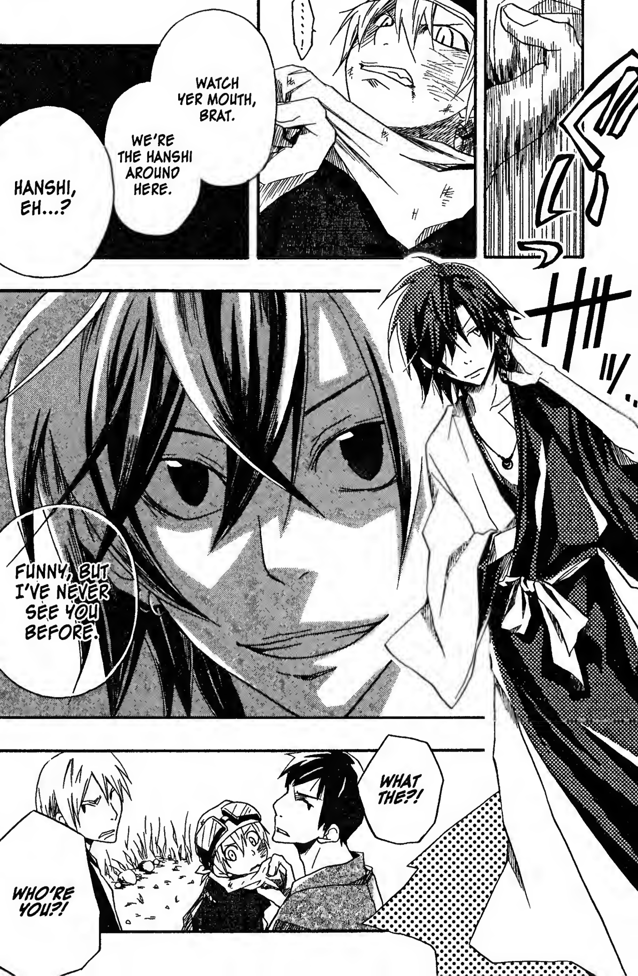

MY HOUSE'S THIS WAY!!
OKAY.
I THINK WE BOUGHT TOO MUCH...
Super Huge Pork Bun
AND YOU SNUCK YOURS IN HERE, TOO.
Uh...
IT'S COOL! WE NEVER GET PORK BUNS!
Let's eat!
....
Oh, kid...

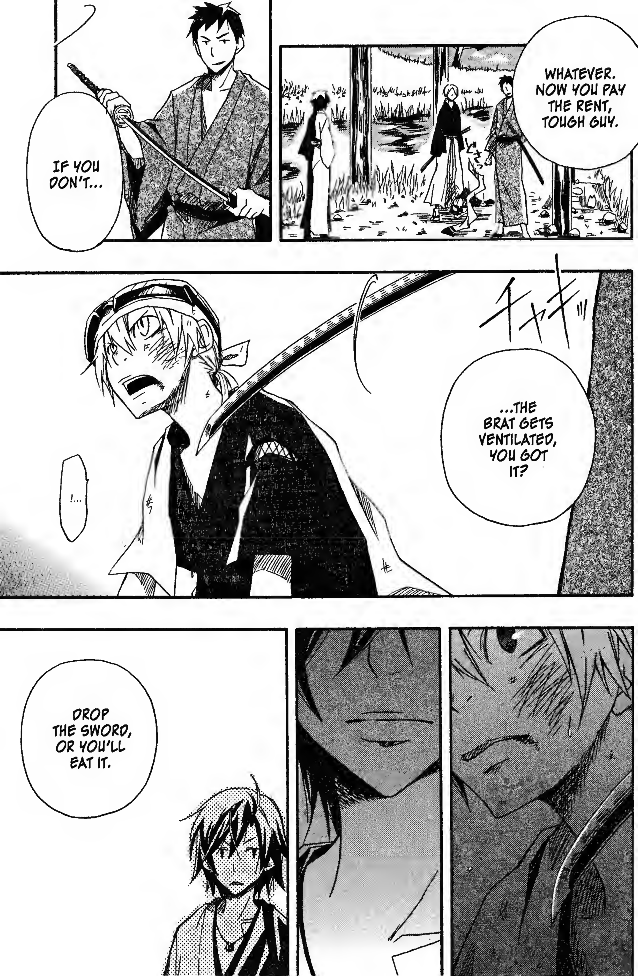

つむぎ工房
Sign: Tsumugi Factory
THAT'S AMAZING! YOU EVEN MAKE THE PARTS?
SURE DO!
がっがっがっ
Super Huge Pork Bun
Oh.
HEY, CAN YOU MAKE A CHARM OUT OF THIS FOR ME?
JINGLE
YOUR ASKING PRICE IS FINE.
YOU GOT IT. BUT IT'S GONNA COST YOU!
YAY FOR RICH PEOPLE! ★
....
Meat
FOR HOW MUCH?
Meat
OH...BUT THE COPYRIGHT...
WHAT'S THAT?
Heh.

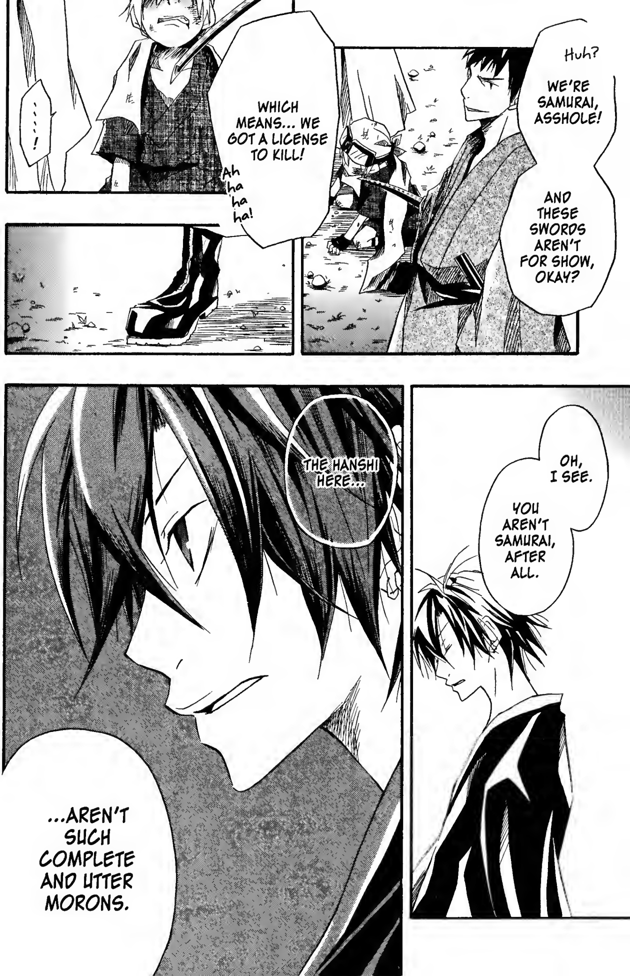

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D KNOW SOMEBODY LIKE HIM?
I SAVED TSUMUGI FROM SOME BULLIES, SO HE STUCK TO ME.
WHAT? WHEN DID YOU DO THAT?
Cool!
HE TOLD ME...
...HIS FOLKS WERE KILLED BY SAMURAI.
THEY JUST CUT 'EM DOWN.
ALL THEY DID WAS BUMP INTO THEM OR SOME-THING.

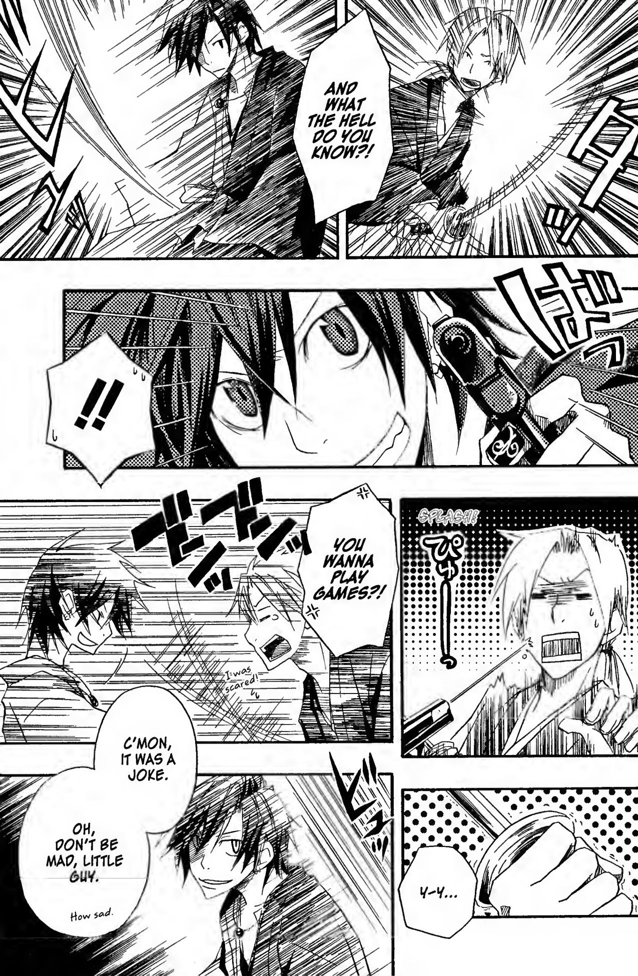

TAP
THERE'RE STILL HARD ASSES LIKE THAT AROUND, HUH?
SHIK
I'M SURPRISED HE DOESN'T HATE ALL US SAMURAI.
HE TALKS ABOUT MONEY AND STUFF, BUT THE TRUTH IS...
...HE'S INFATUATED WITH HEROES.
HEROES THAT ALWAYS DEFEAT THE BAD GUYS
STILL JUST A KID, EH?

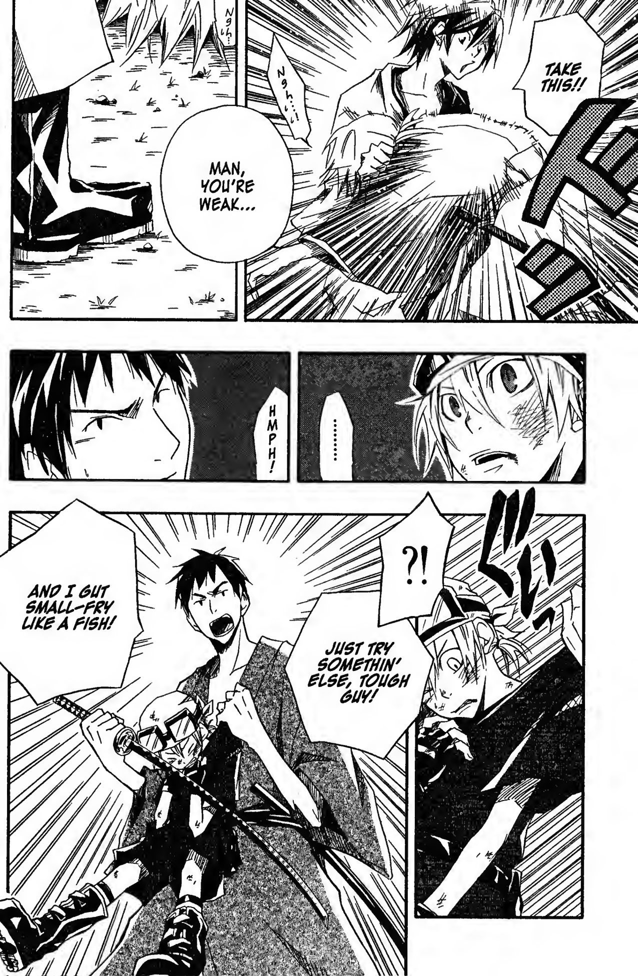

HEY.
WHO SAID YOU COULD OPEN UP SHOP HERE?
YOU WANNA SELL YOUR CRAP HERE, YOU GOTTA PAY US RENT.
WHO'RE YOU?
WHAT'RE THESE? KID'S STUFF, EH?
GIVE THAT BACK!

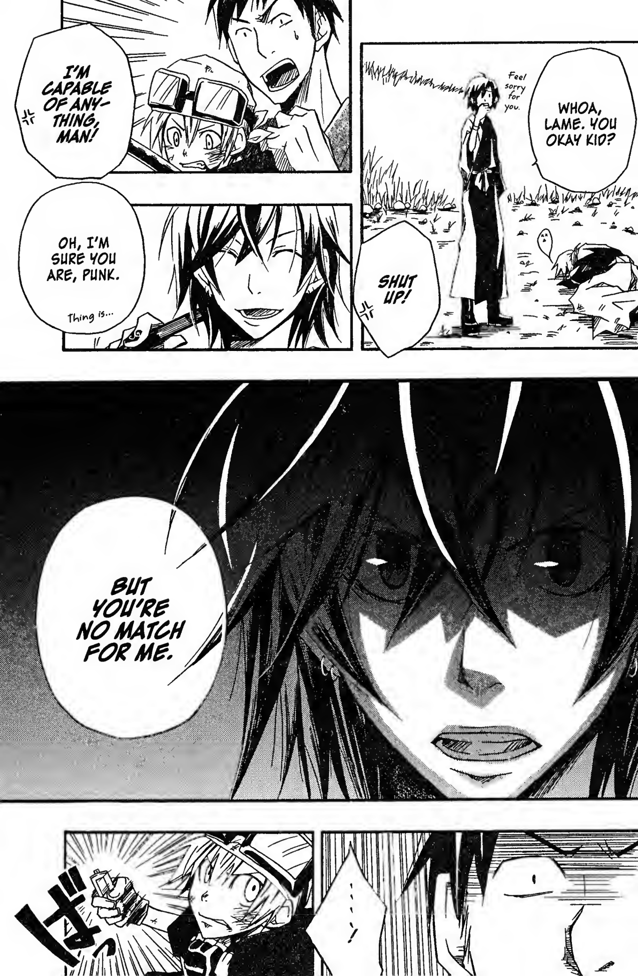

......!
WATCH YER MOUTH, BRAT.
WE'RE THE HANSHI AROUND HERE.
HANSHI, EH...?
FUNNY, BUT I'VE NEVER SEE YOU BEFORE.
WHAT THE?!
WHO'RE YOU?!

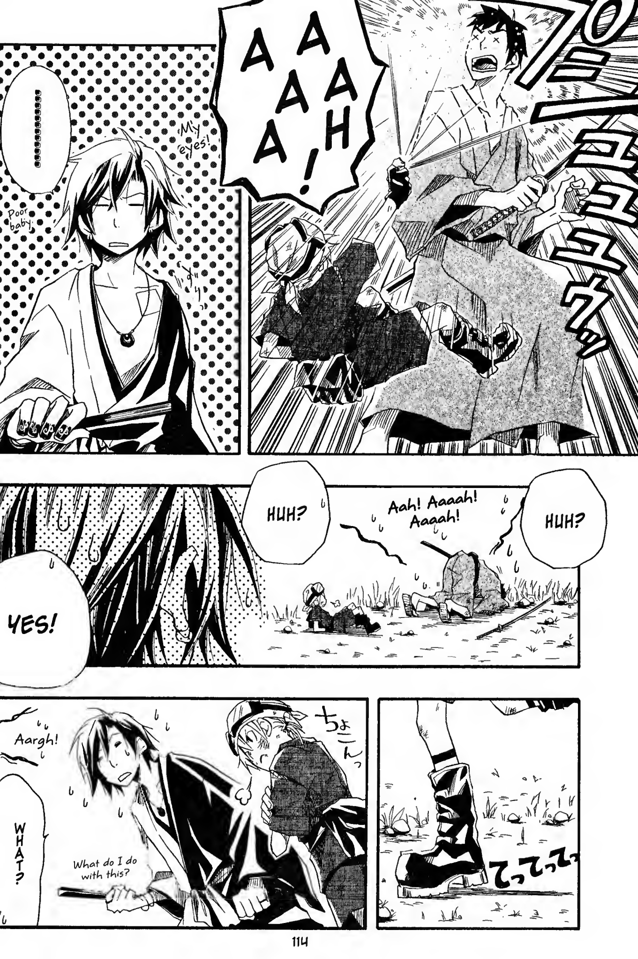

WHATEVER. NOW YOU PAY THE RENT, TOUGH GUY.
IF YOU DON'T...
チャキッ
...THE BRAT GETS VENTILATED, YOU GOT IT?
!...
DROP THE SWORD, OR YOU'LL EAT IT.

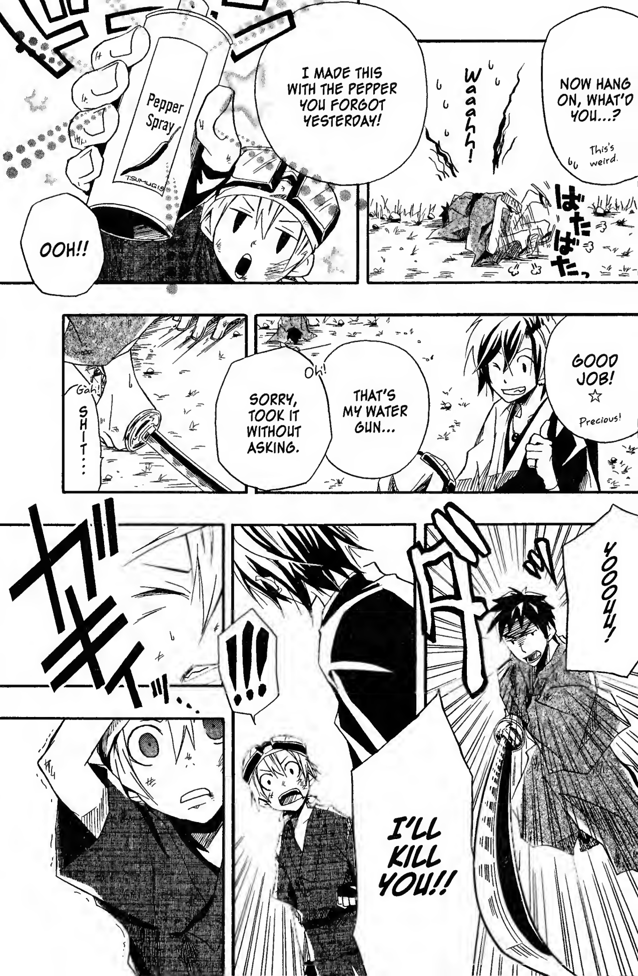

Huh?
WE'RE SAMURAI, ASSHOLE!
AND THESE SWORDS AREN'T FOR SHOW, OKAY?
WHICH MEANS... WE GOT A LICENSE TO KILL!
Ah ha ha ha!
....!
OH, I SEE.
YOU AREN'T SAMURAI, AFTER ALL.
THE HANSHI HERE...
...AREN'T SUCH COMPLETE AND UTTER MORONS.

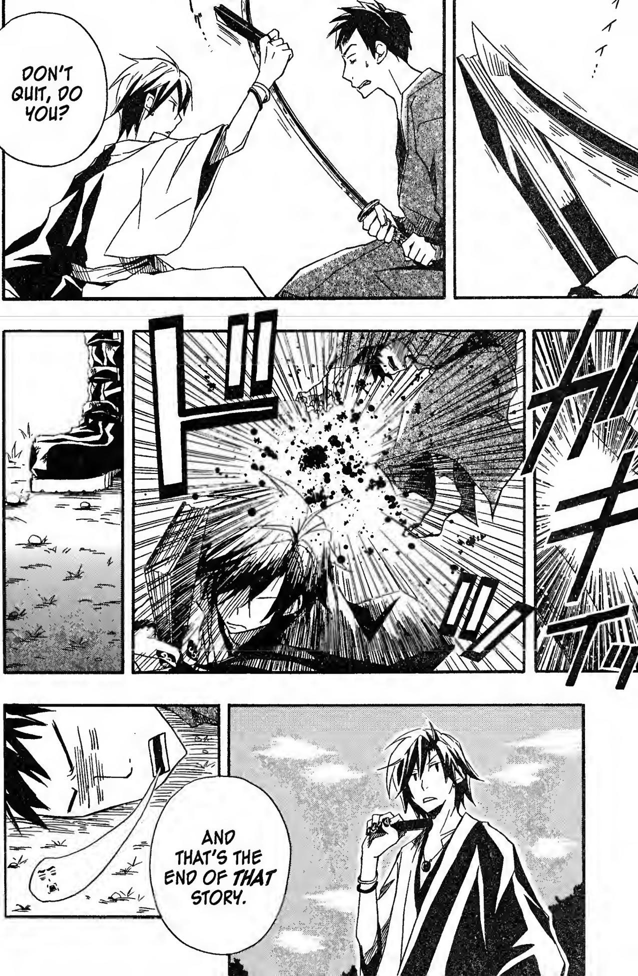

AND WHAT THE HELL DO YOU KNOW?!
!!
SPLASH!
ぴゅーっ
YOU WANNA PLAY GAMES?!
ブンブンッ
I was scared!
C'MON, IT WAS A JOKE.
OH, DON'T BE MAD, LITTLE GUY.
How sad.
Y-Y...

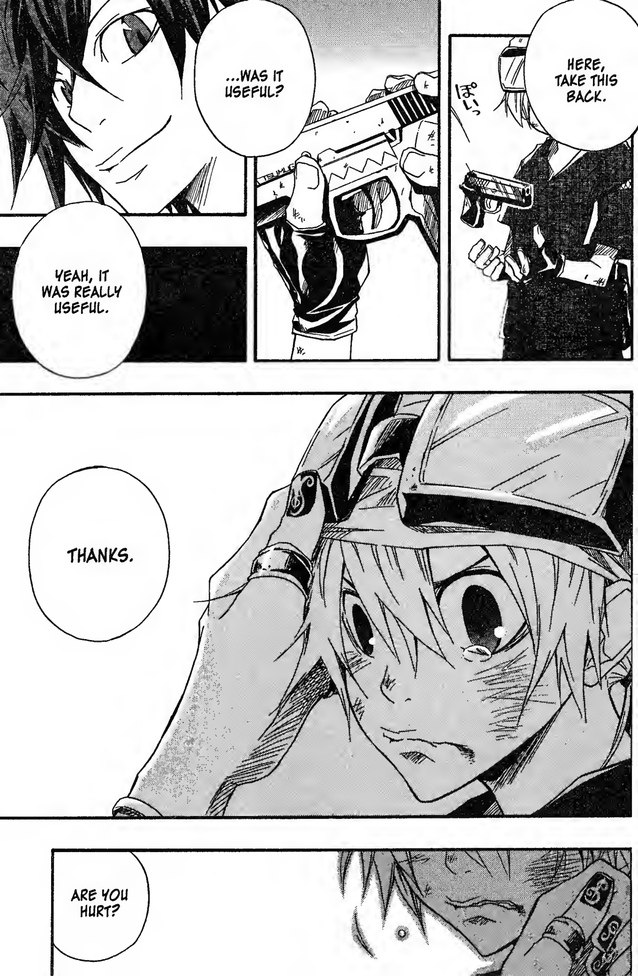

TAKE THIS!!
Ngh...!
Ngh...
MAN, YOU'RE WEAK...
......
HMPH!
?!
JUST TRY SOMETHIN' ELSE, TOUGH GUY!
AND I GUT SMALL-FRY LIKE A FISH!

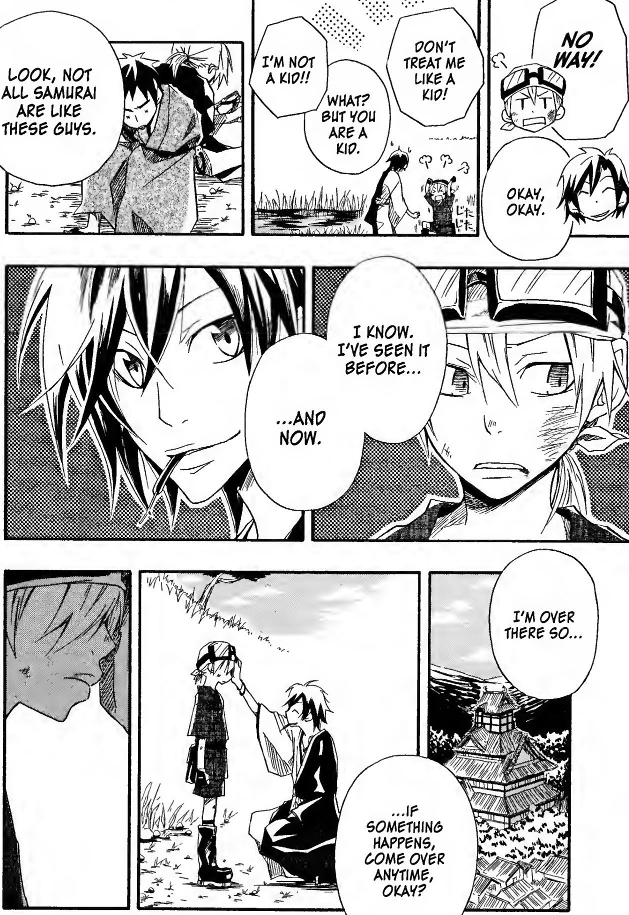

Feel sorry for you.
WHOA, LAME. YOU OKAY KID?
SHUT UP!
I'M CAPABLE OF ANYTHING, MAN!
OH, I'M SURE YOU ARE, PUNK.
Thing is...
BUT YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR ME.
...!
バッ

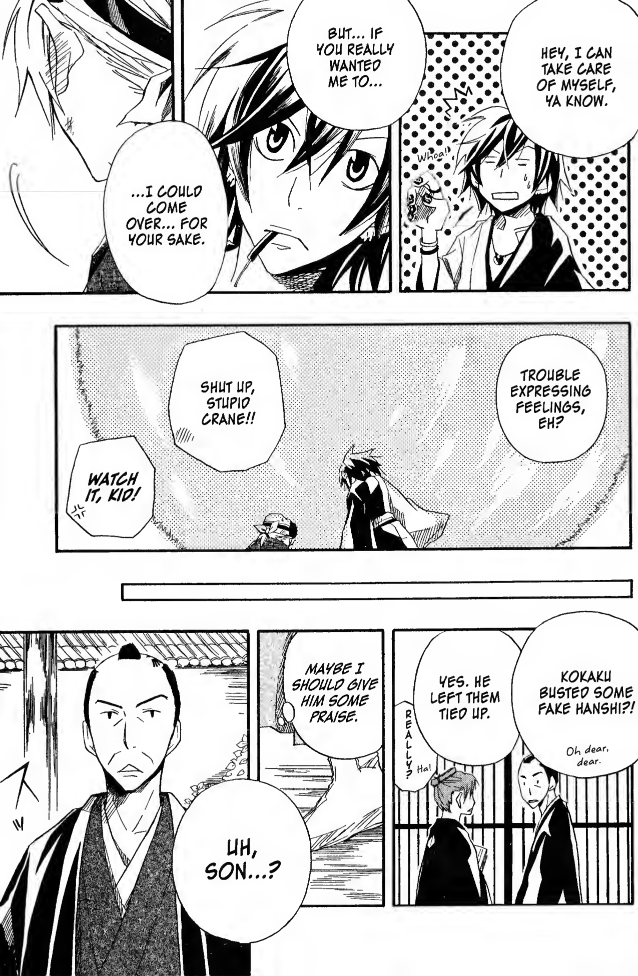

AAAAAH!
プシュュュウッ
....
My eyes!
Poor baby.
ずり
HUH?
Aah! Aaaah! Aaaah!
HUH?
YES!
てってって
ちょーんっ
Aargh!
WHAT?
What do I do with this?

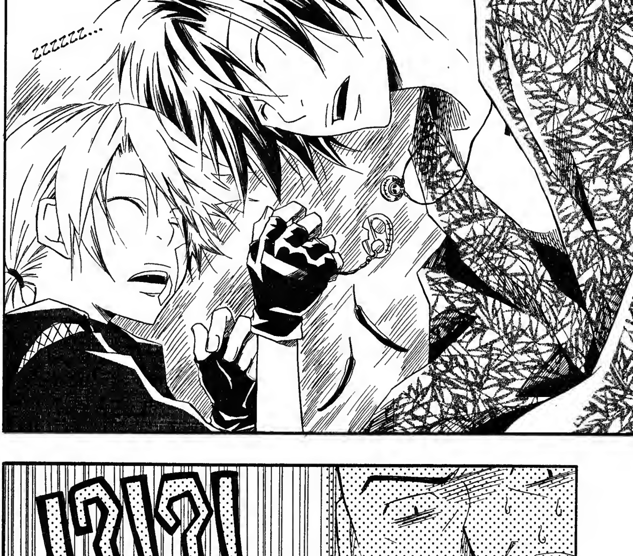

NOW HANG ON, WHAT'D YOU...?
This's weird.
Waaahh!
ばたばたっ
I MADE THIS WITH THE PEPPER YOU FORGOT YESTERDAY!
Pepper Spray
TSUMUGI9
OOH!!
GOOD JOB! ☆
Precious!
THAT'S MY WATER GUN...
Oh!
SORRY, TOOK IT WITHOUT ASKING.
Gah!
SHIT...
YOOOUU!
バッ
ガギィッ...
!!!
I'LL KILL YOU!!


イイイ…
DON'T QUIT, DO YOU?
ガキン
ドッ
AND THAT'S THE END OF *THAT* STORY.

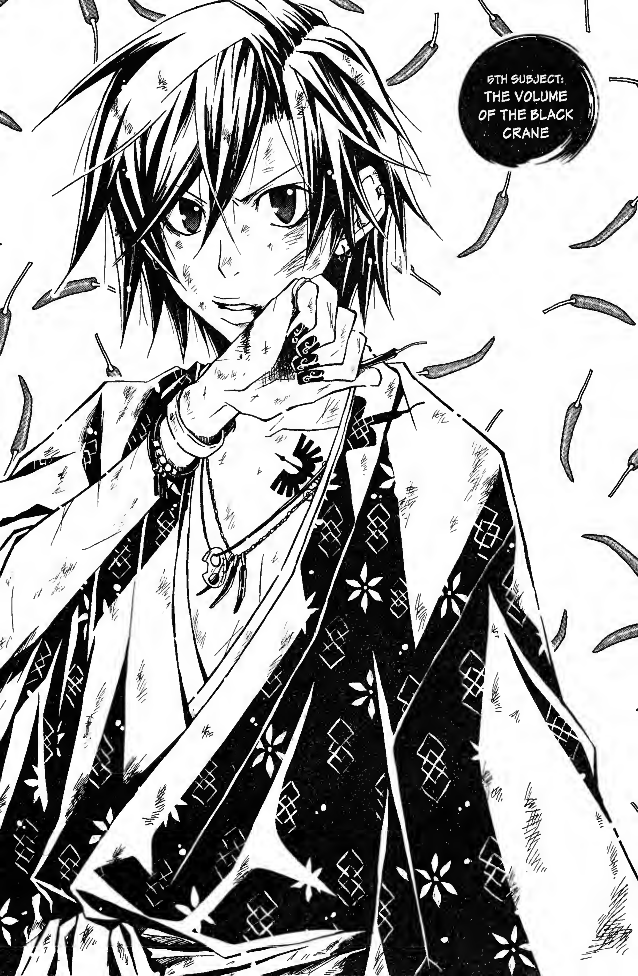

HERE, TAKE THIS BACK.
ぽいっ
...WAS IT USEFUL?
YEAH, IT WAS REALLY USEFUL.
THANKS.
ARE YOU HURT?

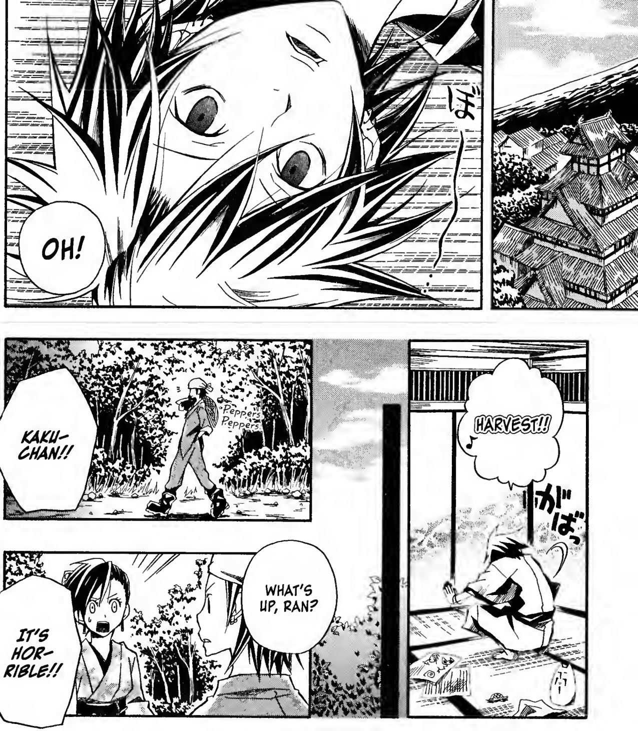

LOOK, NOT ALL SAMURAI ARE LIKE THESE GUYS.
I'M NOT A KID!!
WHAT? BUT YOU ARE A KID.
じたじた
DON'T TREAT ME LIKE A KID!
NO WAY!
OKAY, OKAY.
I KNOW. I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE...
...AND NOW.
I'M OVER THERE SO...
...IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, COME OVER ANYTIME, OKAY?


HEY, I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, YA KNOW.
Whoa!!
BUT... IF YOU REALLY WANTED ME TO...
...I COULD COME OVER... FOR YOUR SAKE.
TROUBLE EXPRESSING FEELINGS, EH?
SHUT UP, STUPID CRANE!!
WATCH IT, KID!
KOKAKU BUSTED SOME FAKE HANSHI?!
Oh dear, dear.
YES. HE LEFT THEM TIED UP.
REALLY?
Ha!
MAYBE I SHOULD GIVE HIM SOME PRAISE.
UH, SON...?


ZZZZZZ...
!?!?!
WHOSE SON IS THIS?!
HMM? ENTO?
NOPE.

4TH SUBJECT: THE VOLUME OF THE UNEMPLOYED/THE END

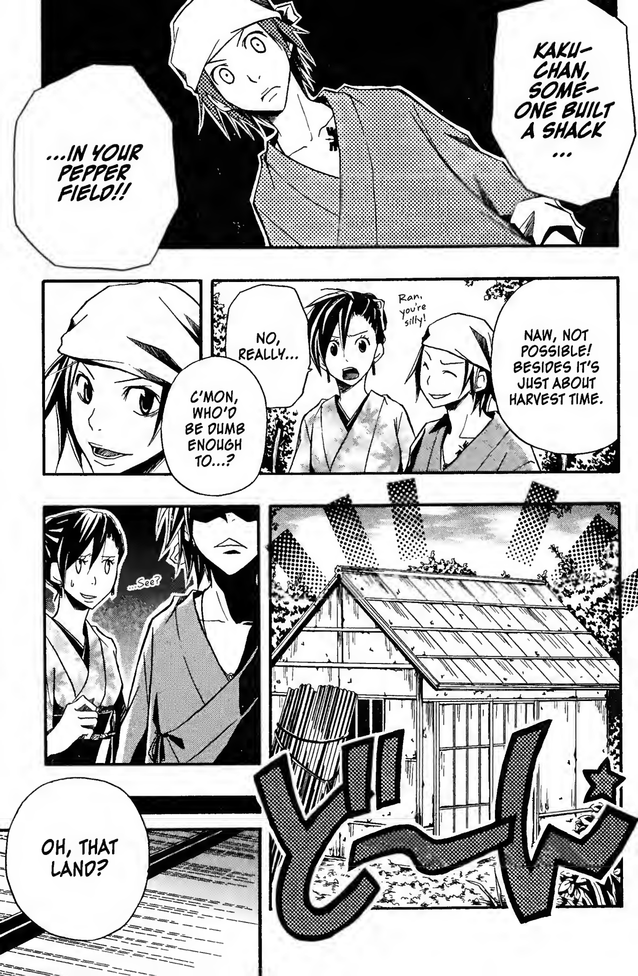

5TH SUBJECT:
THE VOLUME OF THE BLACK CRANE

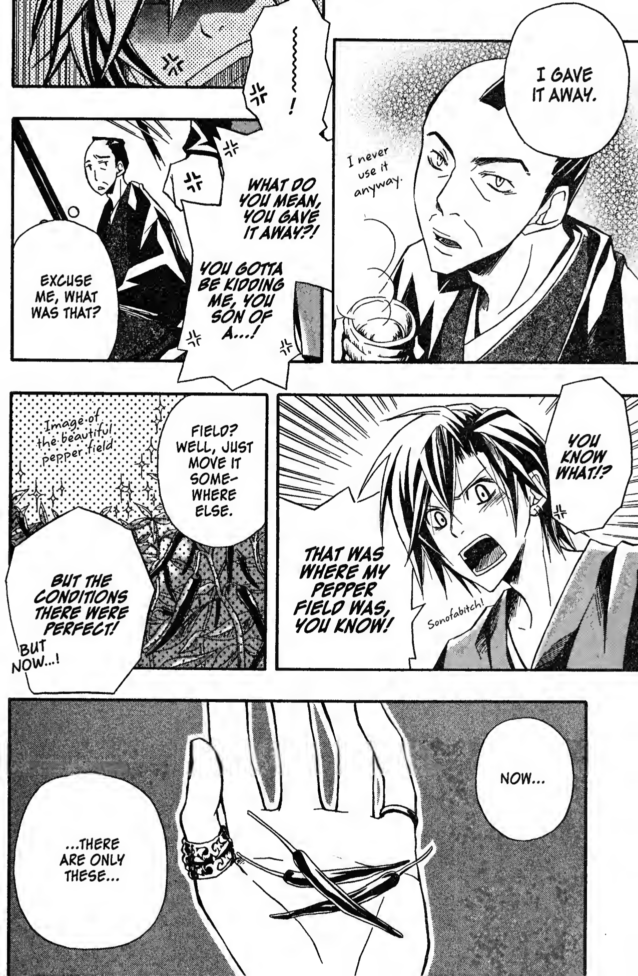

ぼ
OH!
HARVEST!!
がばっ
KAKU-CHAN!!
Peppers Peppers
WHAT'S UP, RAN?
IT'S HORRIBLE!!

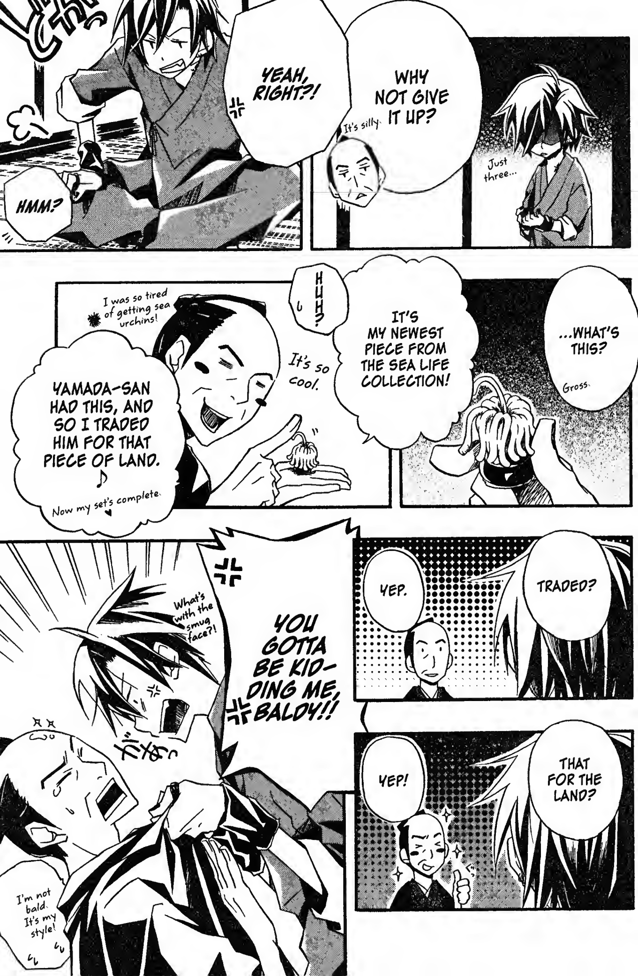
EGGPLANT FAMILY PEPPER TRIBE NUMBER 1

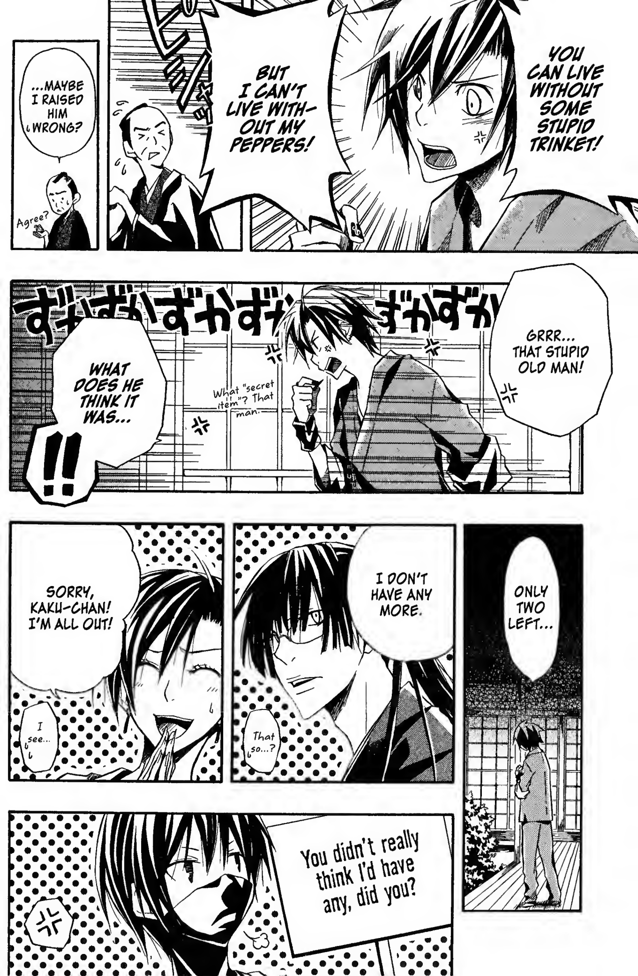
"KANZURI" IS A SPECIALTY ITEM FROM MYOUKOUSHI, NIIGATA. EVERY YEAR ON TV, THEY SHOW SCENES OF PEPPERS SCATTERED ON TOP OF THE SNOW. THEY GRIND THESE AND MIX THEM WITH THINGS LIKE YEAST, SALT AND OIL, AND SELL THEM IN BOTTLES. I SUGGEST USING IT IN HOT POT DISHES, WITH TOFU OR WHATEVER YOU LIKE!

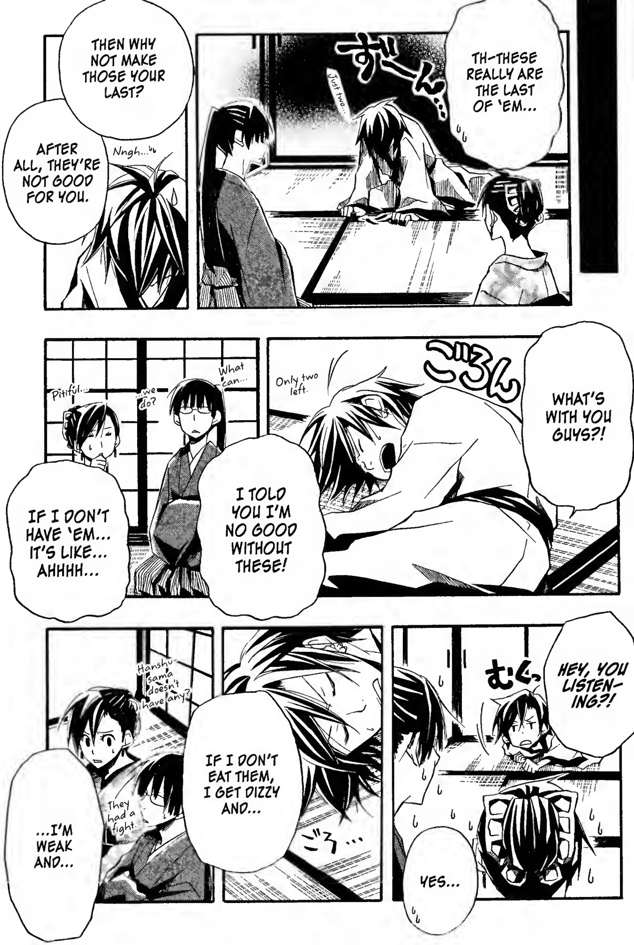
The red ones on top of the white snow are quite a sight to see.

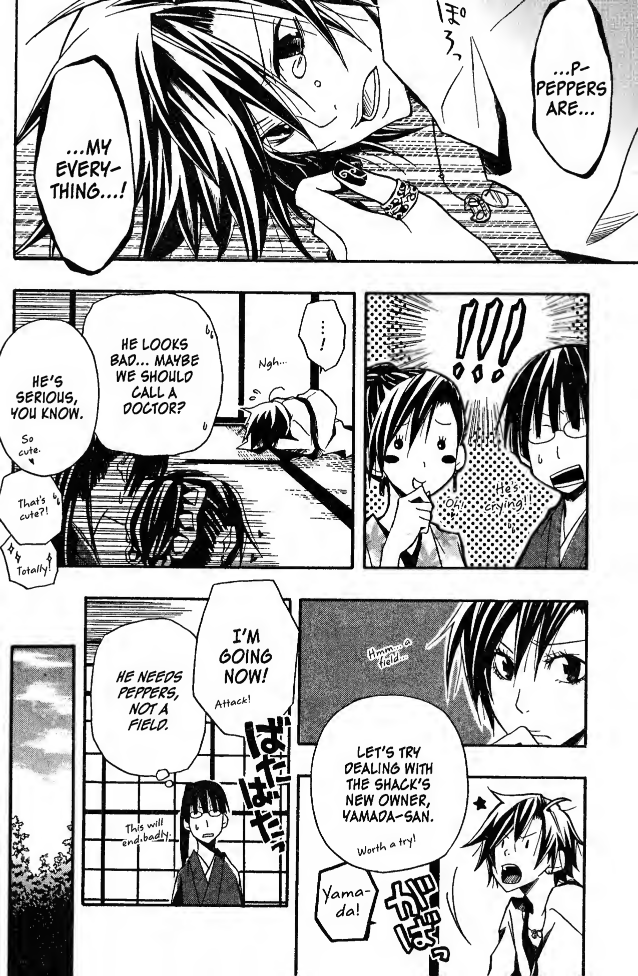

KAKU-CHAN, SOMEONE BUILT A SHACK ...
...IN YOUR PEPPER FIELD!!
NAW, NOT POSSIBLE! BESIDES IT'S JUST ABOUT HARVEST TIME.
Ran, you're silly!
NO, REALLY...
C'MON, WHO'D BE DUMB ENOUGH TO...?
どーん
...See?
OH, THAT LAND?

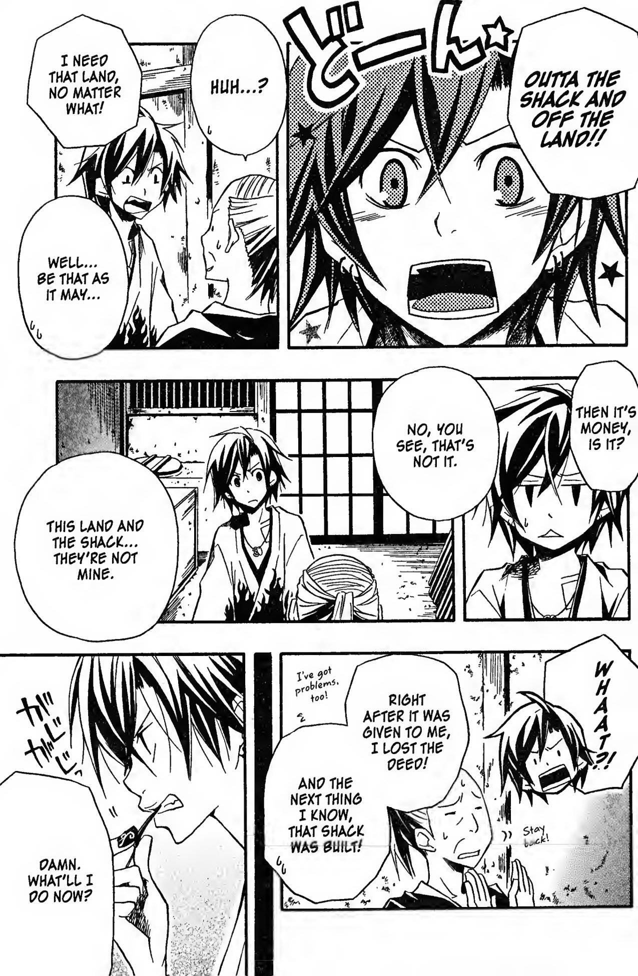

～～～～～!
I GAVE IT AWAY.
I never use it anyway.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU GAVE IT AWAY?!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME, YOU SON OF A...!
EXCUSE ME, WHAT WAS THAT?
YOU KNOW WHAT!?
THAT WAS WHERE MY PEPPER FIELD WAS, YOU KNOW!
Sonofabitch!
FIELD? WELL, JUST MOVE IT SOMEWHERE ELSE.
Image of the beautiful pepper field
BUT THE CONDITIONS THERE WERE PERFECT!
BUT NOW...!
NOW...
...THERE ARE ONLY THESE...

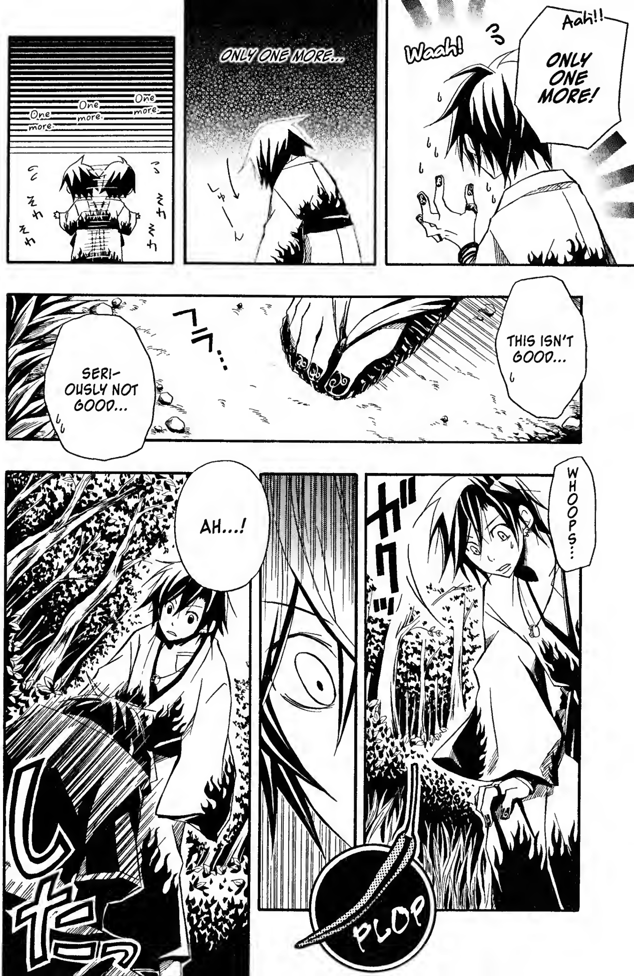

Just three...
WHY NOT GIVE IT UP?
It's silly.
YEAH, RIGHT?!
HMM?
...WHAT'S THIS?
Gross.
HUH?
IT'S MY NEWEST PIECE FROM THE SEA LIFE COLLECTION!
It's so cool.
I was so tired of getting sea urchins!
YAMADA-SAN HAD THIS, AND SO I TRADED HIM FOR THAT PIECE OF LAND. ♪
Now my set's complete. ♥
TRADED?
YEP.
THAT FOR THE LAND?
YEP!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME, BALDY!!
What's with the smug face?!
I'm not bald. It's my style!

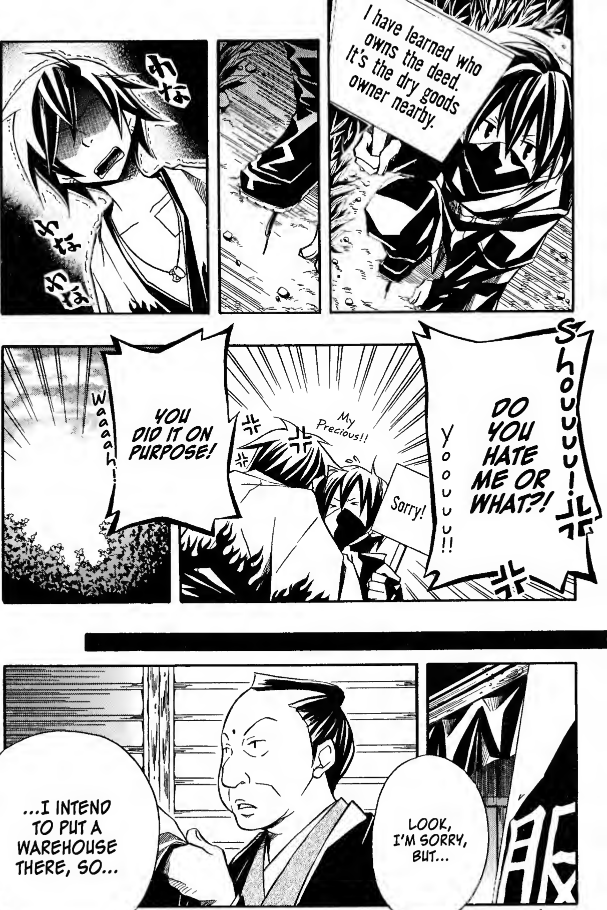

YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT SOME STUPID TRINKET!
BUT I CAN'T LIVE WITH-OUT MY PEPPERS!
...MAYBE I RAISED HIM WRONG?
Agree?
GRRR... THAT STUPID OLD MAN!
ずかずかずかず　ずかずか
What "secret item"? That man.
WHAT DOES HE THINK IT WAS... !!
ONLY TWO LEFT...
I DON'T HAVE ANY MORE.
That so...?
SORRY, KAKU-CHAN! I'M ALL OUT!
I see...
You didn't really think I'd have any, did you?


TH-THESE REALLY ARE THE LAST OF 'EM...
ず〜ん…
Just two...
THEN WHY NOT MAKE THOSE YOUR LAST?
AFTER ALL, THEY'RE NOT GOOD FOR YOU.
Nngh...
ごろん
WHAT'S WITH YOU GUYS?!
Only two left.
I TOLD YOU I'M NO GOOD WITHOUT THESE!
What can...
...we do?
Pitiful...
IF I DON'T HAVE 'EM... IT'S LIKE... AHHHH...
HEY, YOU LISTENING?!
むくっ
YES...
IF I DON'T EAT THEM, I GET DIZZY AND...
ごろ…
Hanshu-sama doesn't have any?
They had a fight.
...I'M WEAK AND...

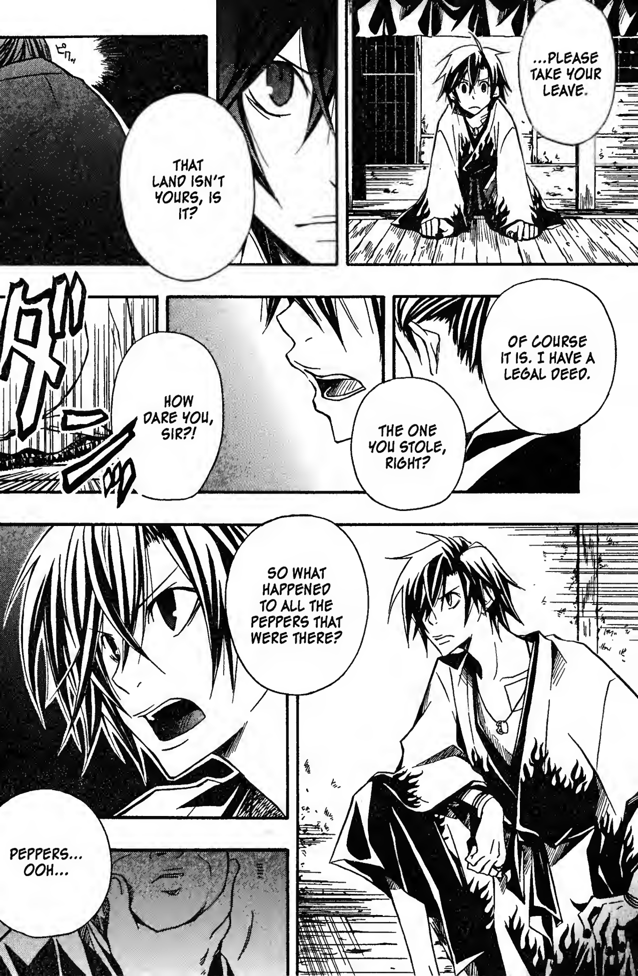

ぽろっ
...P-PEPPERS ARE...
...MY EVERYTHING...!
!!!
He's crying!!
Oh!
...!
Ngh...
HE LOOKS BAD... MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL A DOCTOR?
HE'S SERIOUS, YOU KNOW.
So cute.
That's cute?!
Totally!
Hmm... a field...
LET'S TRY DEALING WITH THE SHACK'S NEW OWNER, YAMADA-SAN.
Worth a try!
Yama-da!
がばっ
I'M GOING NOW!
Attack!
ばたばたっ
HE NEEDS PEPPERS, NOT A FIELD.
This will end badly.

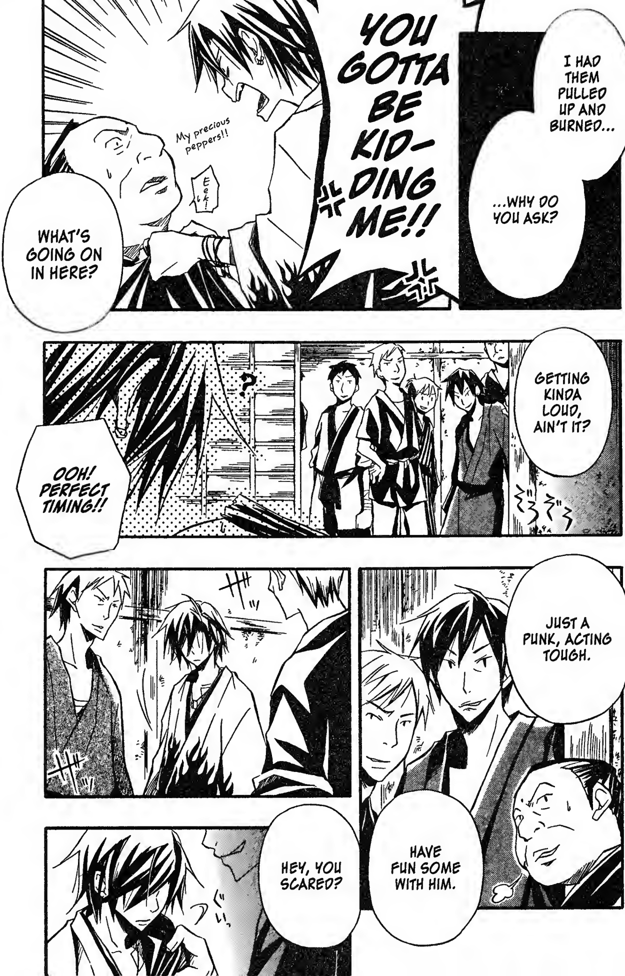

どーん☆
OUTTA THE SHACK AND OFF THE LAND!!
I NEED THAT LAND, NO MATTER WHAT!
HUH...?
WELL... BE THAT AS IT MAY...
THEN IT'S MONEY, IS IT?
NO, YOU SEE, THAT'S NOT IT.
THIS LAND AND THE SHACK... THEY'RE NOT MINE.
WHAAT?!
RIGHT AFTER IT WAS GIVEN TO ME, I LOST THE DEED!
I've got problems, too!
AND THE NEXT THING I KNOW, THAT SHACK WAS BUILT!
Stay back!
ガジガジ
DAMN. WHAT'LL I DO NOW?

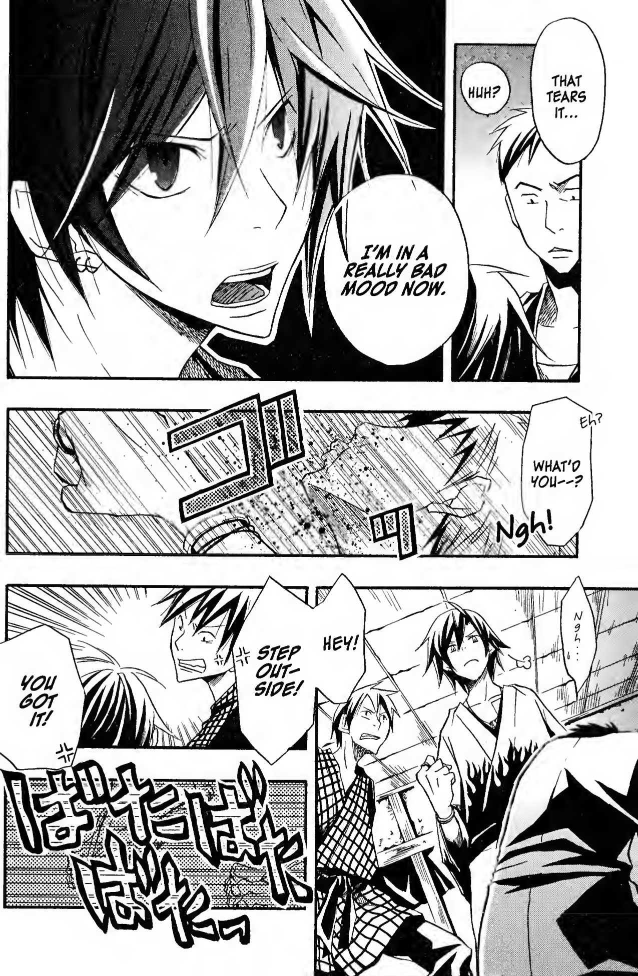

Aah!!
ONLY ONE MORE!
Waah!
ONLY ONE MORE...
しゅ〜ん
One more.
One more.
One more.
THIS ISN'T GOOD...
フラ…
SERIOUSLY NOT GOOD...
WHOOPS...
ガクッ
AH...!
PLOP

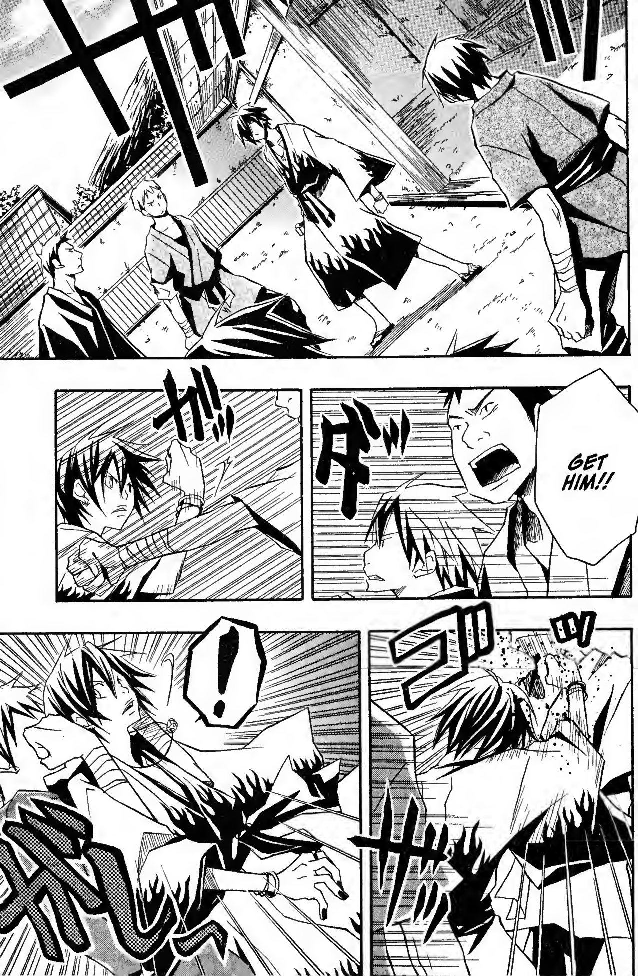

I have learned who owns the deed. It's the dry goods owner nearby.
わな
わな
わな
Shouuuu!!
DO YOU HATE ME OR WHAT?!
Yoouuuu!!
My Precious!!
Sorry!
YOU DID IT ON PURPOSE!
Waaaah!
服
LOOK, I'M SORRY, BUT...
...I INTEND TO PUT A WAREHOUSE THERE, SO...

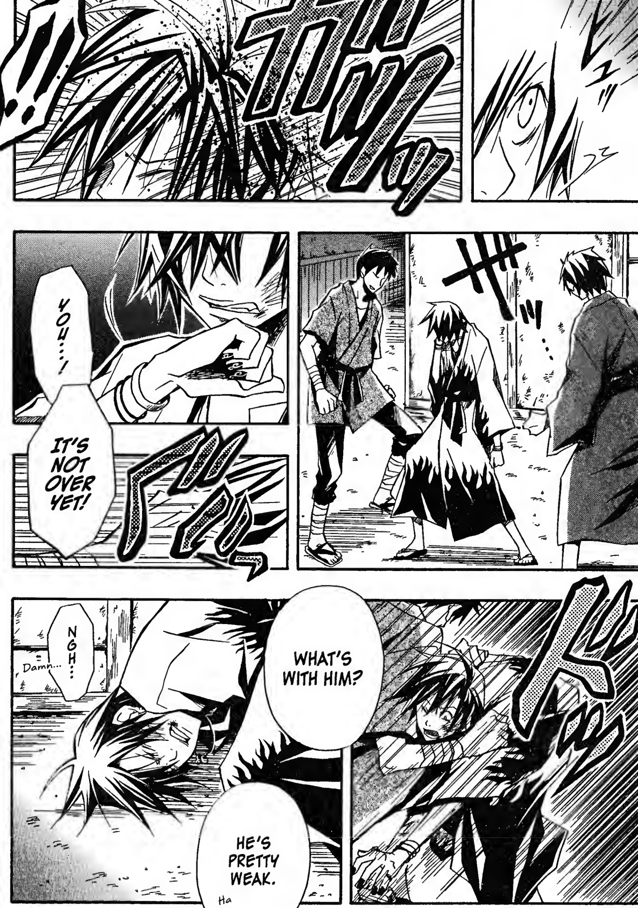
Sign: Dry Goods

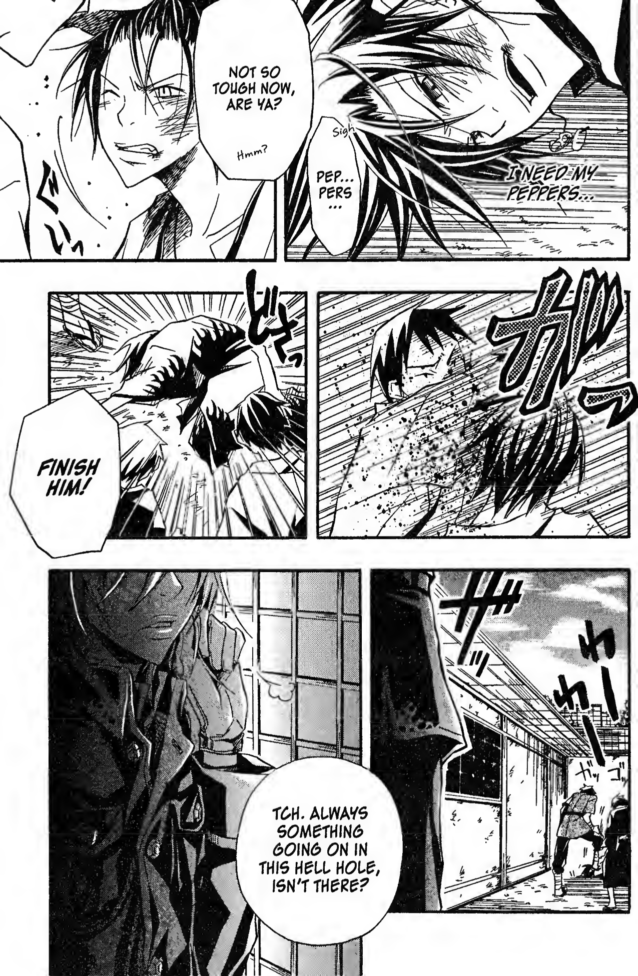

...PLEASE TAKE YOUR LEAVE.
THAT LAND ISN'T YOURS, IS IT?
OF COURSE IT IS. I HAVE A LEGAL DEED.
THE ONE YOU STOLE, RIGHT?
HOW DARE YOU, SIR?!
SO WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THE PEPPERS THAT WERE THERE?
PEPPERS... OOH...

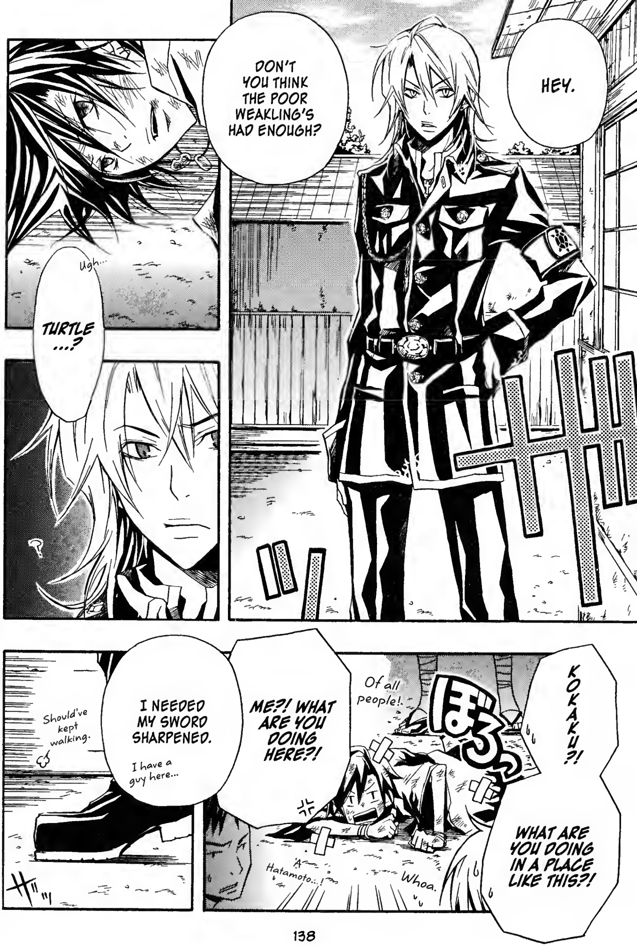

I HAD THEM PULLED UP AND BURNED...
...WHY DO YOU ASK?
YOU GOTTA BE KID-DING ME!!
My precious peppers!!
Eek!
WHAT'S GOING ON IN HERE?
GETTING KINDA LOUD, AIN'T IT?
ぞろ ぞろ
OOH! PERFECT TIMING!!
JUST A PUNK, ACTING TOUGH.
HAVE FUN SOME WITH HIM.
HEY, YOU SCARED?
ぐい

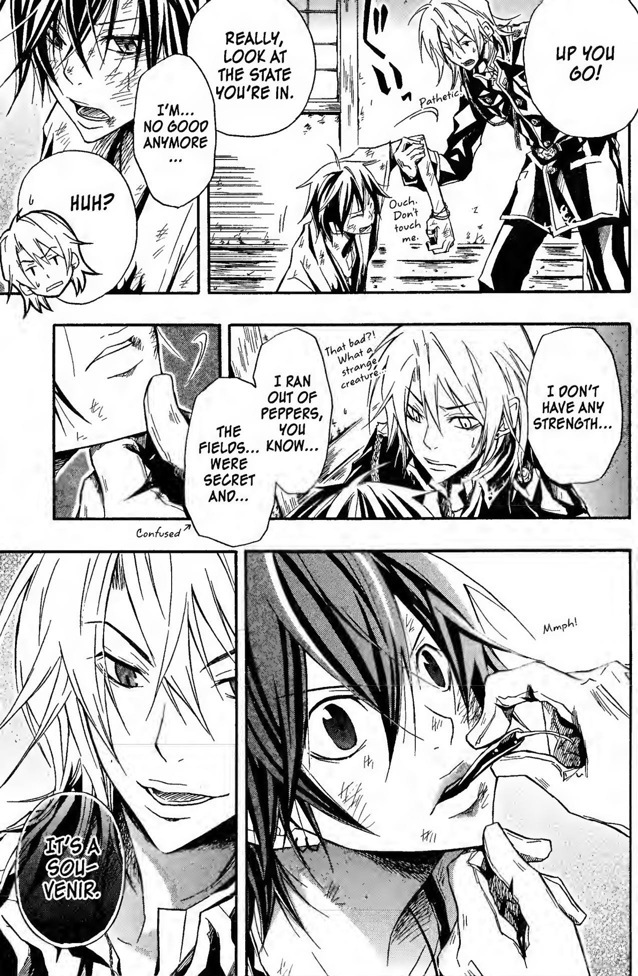

THAT TEARS IT...
HUH?
I'M IN A REALLY BAD MOOD NOW.
Eh?
WHAT'D YOU--?
Ngh!
ゴッ
Ngh...
HEY!
STEP OUTSIDE!
YOU GOT IT!
ばちばちばちっ

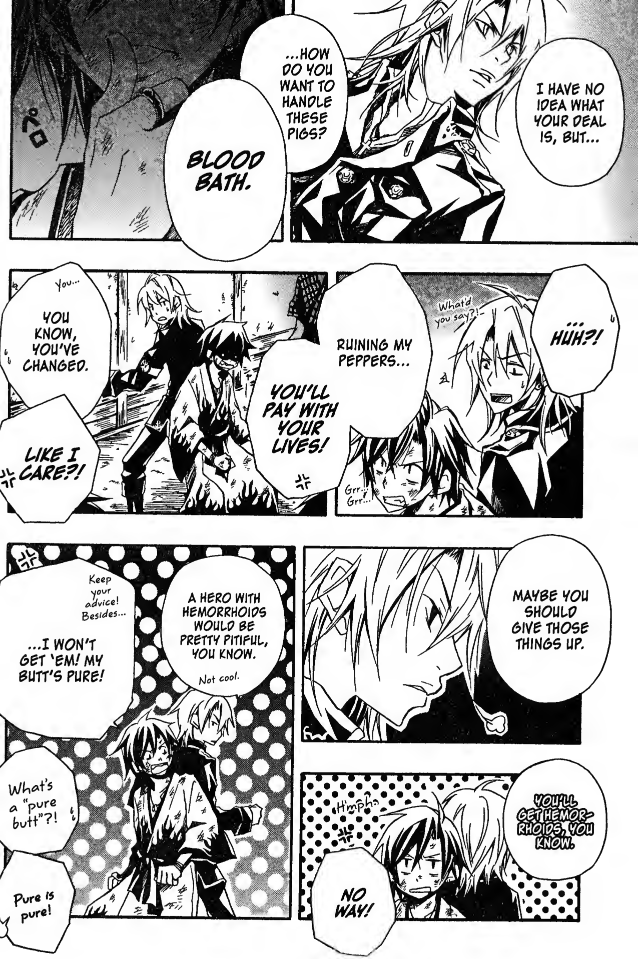

ザッ
GET HIM!!
ダッ
ガッ
!
ゴッ
ザッ

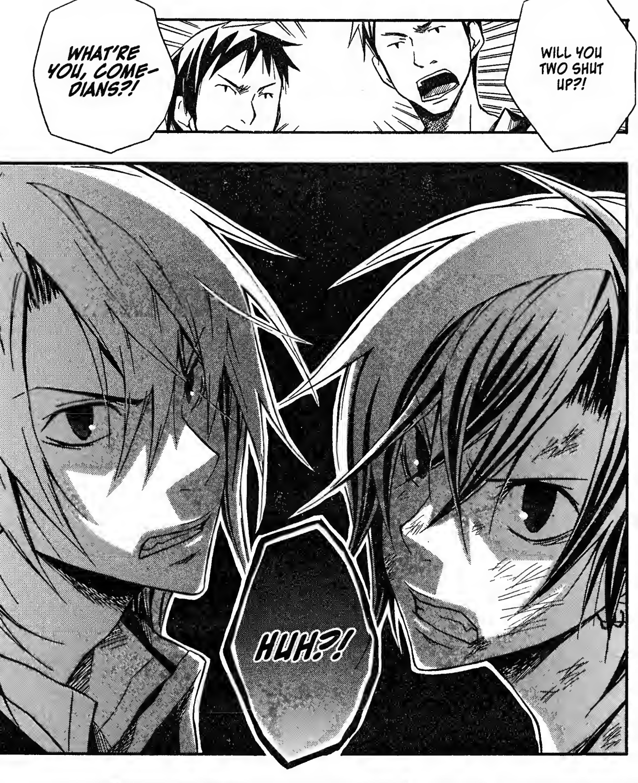

!!
YOU...!
IT'S NOT OVER YET!
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
HE'S PRETTY WEAK.
Ha ha.
NGH...
Damn...

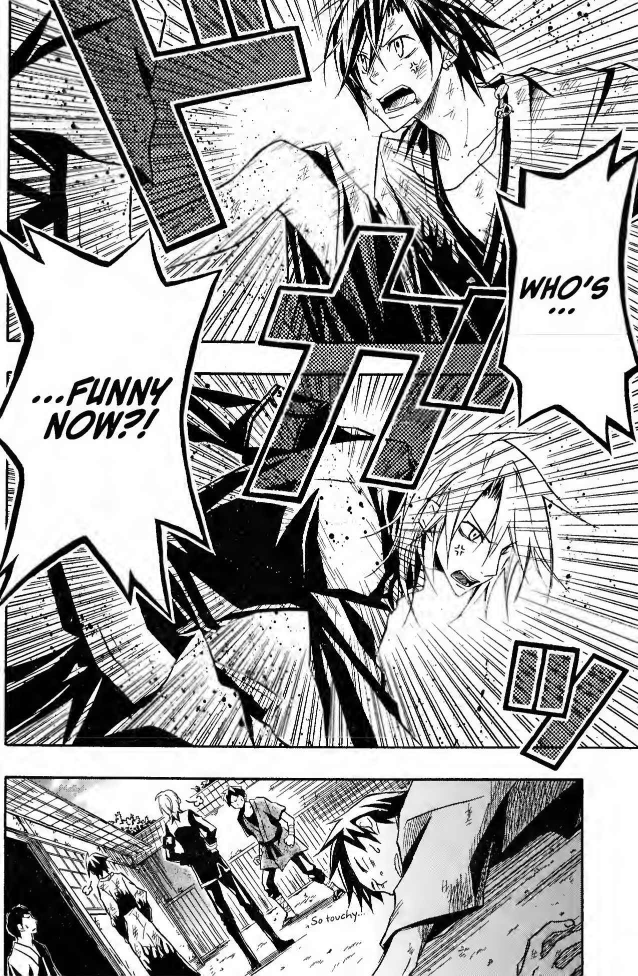

Sigh
PEP... PERS ...
I NEED MY PEPPERS...
NOT SO TOUGH NOW, ARE YA?
Hmm?
ぐいっ
ガッ
どさっ
FINISH HIM!
ザッ
わーわー
ガッ ゴッ
TCH. ALWAYS SOMETHING GOING ON IN THIS HELL HOLE, ISN'T THERE?

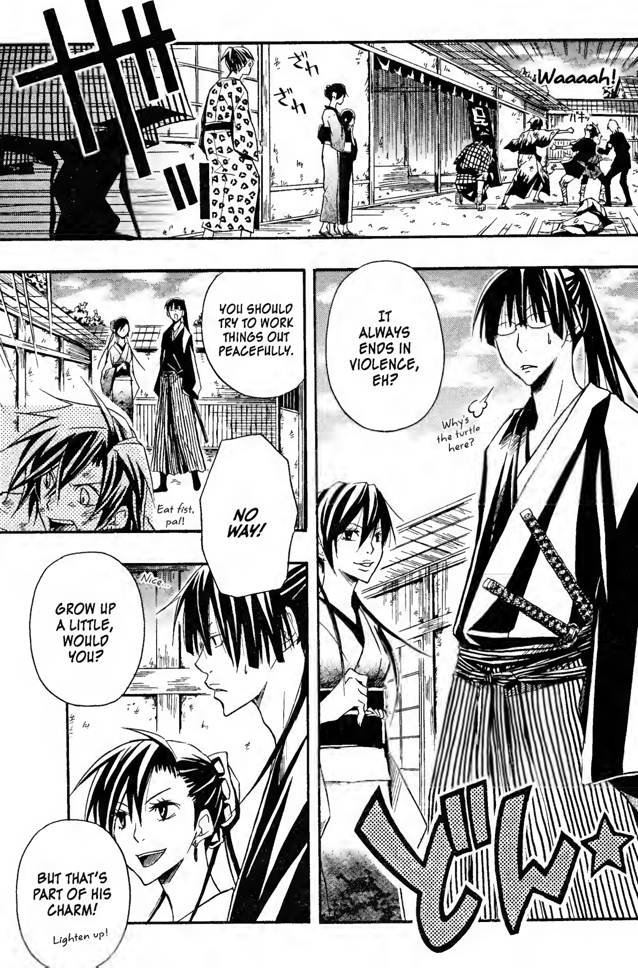

HEY.
DON'T YOU THINK THE POOR WEAKLING'S HAD ENOUGH?
Ugh...
TURTLE ...?
KOKAKU?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?!
ぼろっ
Of all people!
ME?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
A Hatamoto...!
Whoa.
I NEEDED MY SWORD SHARPENED.
I have a guy here...
Should've kept walking.

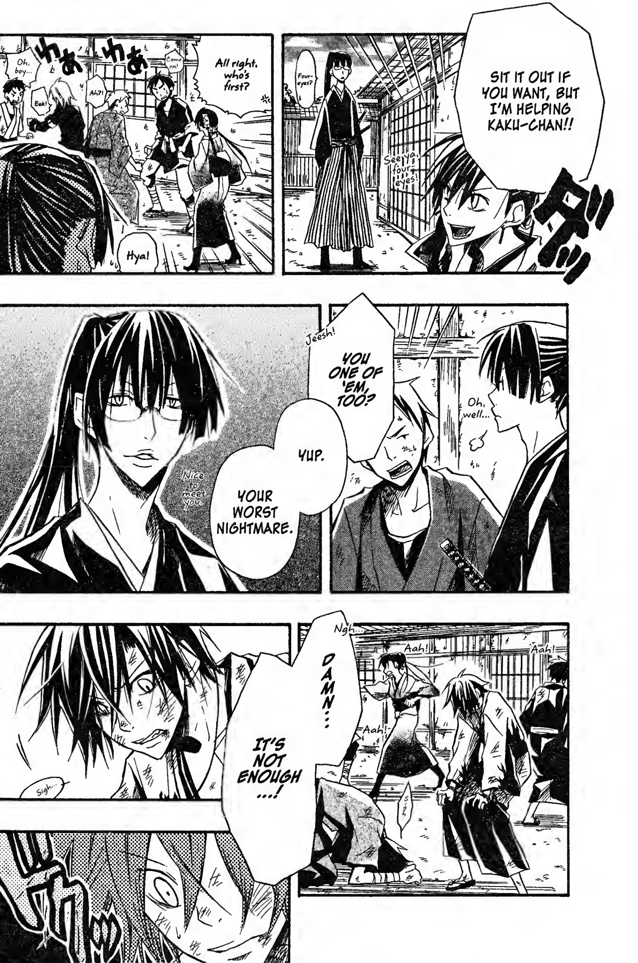

UP YOU GO!
Pathetic.
Ouch. Don't touch me.
REALLY, LOOK AT THE STATE YOU'RE IN.
I'M... NO GOOD ANYMORE...
HUH?
I DON'T HAVE ANY STRENGTH...
That bad?! What a strange creature...
I RAN OUT OF PEPPERS, YOU KNOW...
THE FIELDS... WERE SECRET AND...
Confused
Mmph!
IT'S A SOU-VENIR.

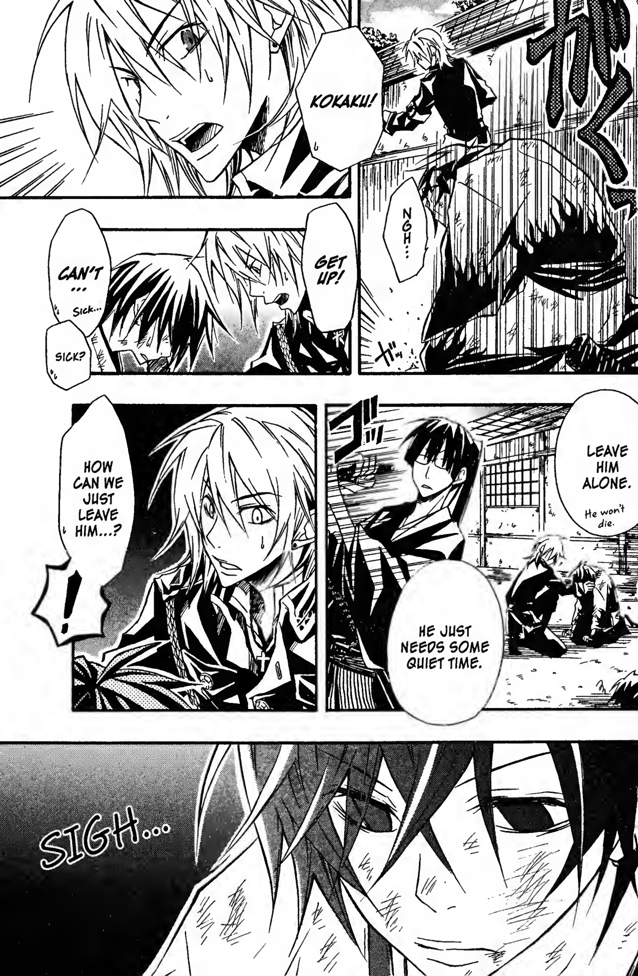

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOUR DEAL IS, BUT...
...HOW DO YOU WANT TO HANDLE THESE PIGS?
ペロ
BLOOD BATH.
What'd you say?!
...HUH?!
RUINING MY PEPPERS...
YOU'LL PAY WITH YOUR LIVES!
Grr... Grr...
You...
YOU KNOW, YOU'VE CHANGED.
LIKE I CARE?!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD GIVE THOSE THINGS UP.
A HERO WITH HEMORRHOIDS WOULD BE PRETTY PITIFUL, YOU KNOW.
Not cool.
Keep your advice! Besides...
...I WON'T GET 'EM! MY BUTT'S PURE!
What's a "pure butt"?!
Pure is pure!
YOU'LL GET HEMORRHOIDS, YOU KNOW.
Hmph...
NO WAY!

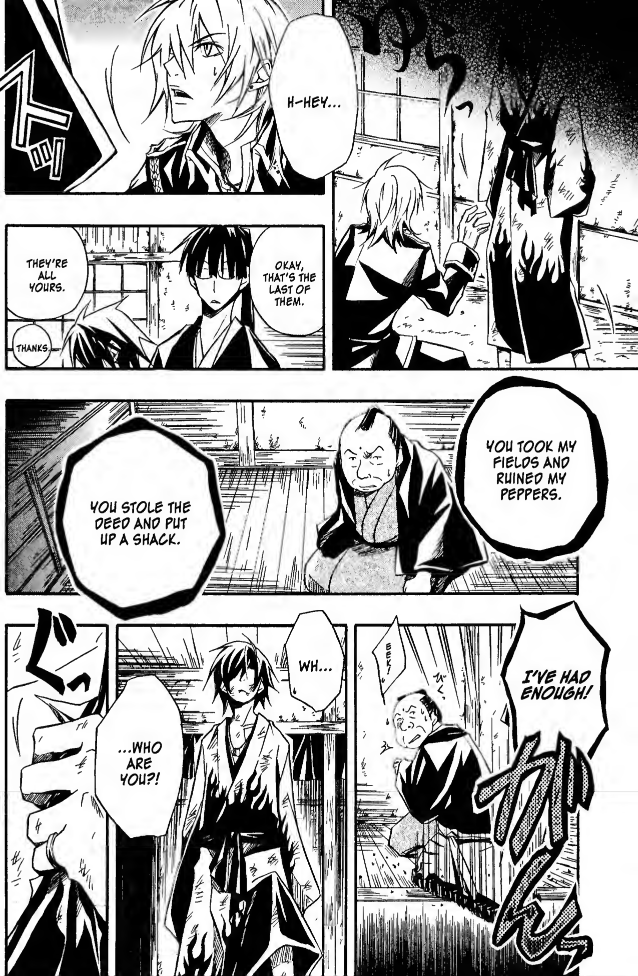

WILL YOU TWO SHUT UP?!
WHAT'RE YOU, COMEDIANS?!
HUH?!

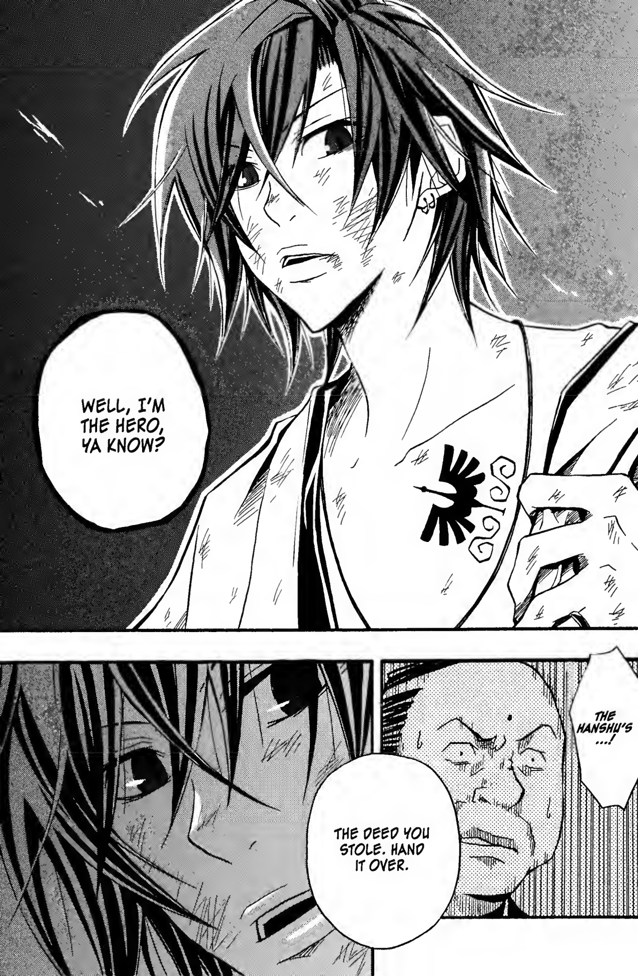

WHO'S ...
...FUNNY NOW?!
ドガッ
So touchy...

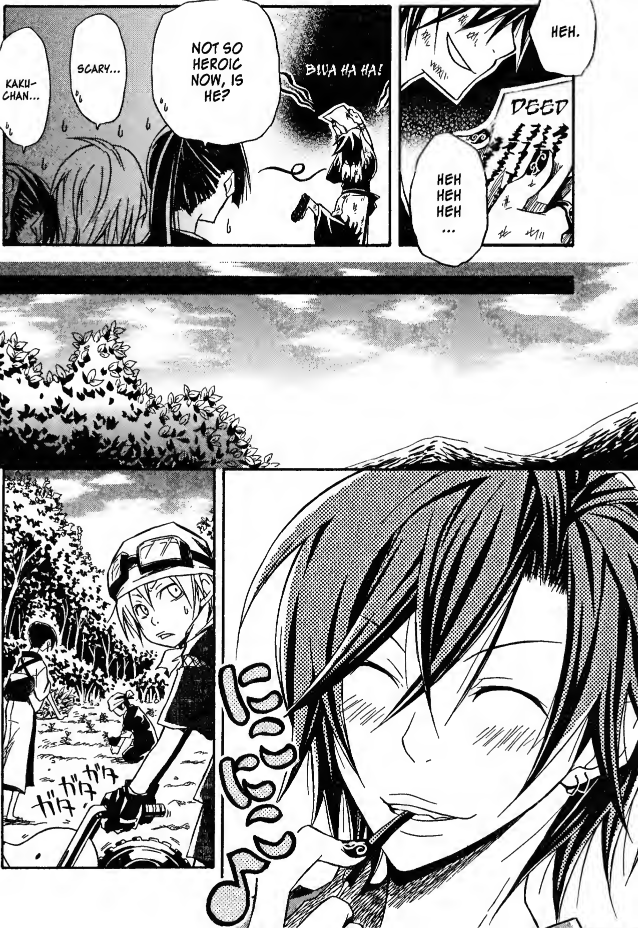

Waaaah!
バキッ
ざわ
ざわ
ザ!!
IT ALWAYS ENDS IN VIOLENCE, EH?
Why's the turtle here?
YOU SHOULD TRY TO WORK THINGS OUT PEACEFULLY.
NO WAY!
Eat fist, pal!
どん☆
GROW UP A LITTLE, WOULD YOU?
Nice.
BUT THAT'S PART OF HIS CHARM!
Lighten up!

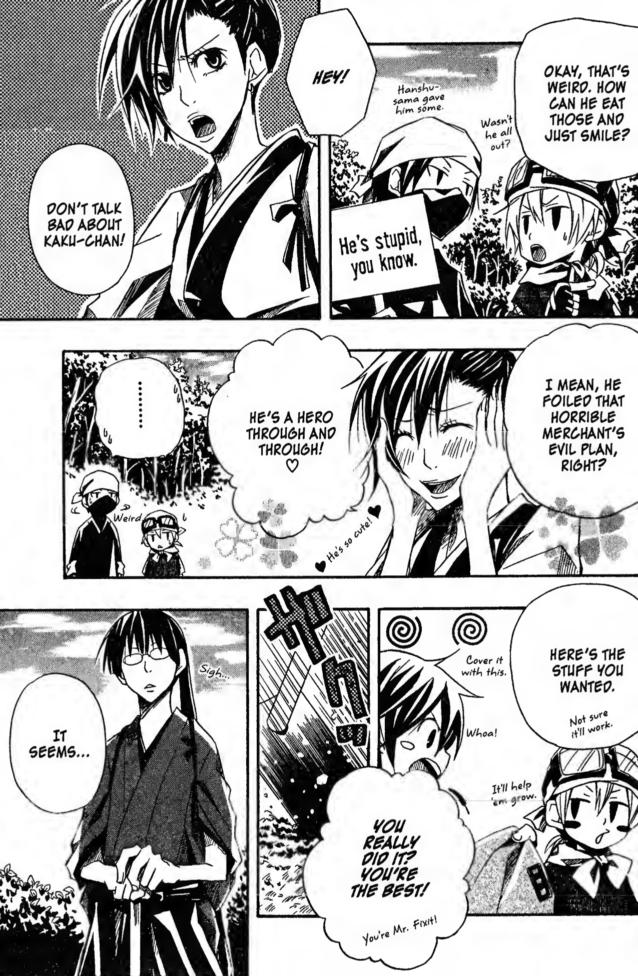

Four-eyes?
SIT IT OUT IF YOU WANT, BUT I'M HELPING KAKU-CHAN!!
See ya, four-eyes!
ダッ
All right, who's first?
わあわあ
Come on!
Ah?!
Eek!
Oh, boy...
Hya!
Jeesh!
YOU ONE OF 'EM, TOO?
Oh, well...
YUP.
YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE.
Nice to meet you.
Ngh...
Aah!
Aah!
DAMN...
Aah!
IT'S NOT ENOUGH...!
Sigh...

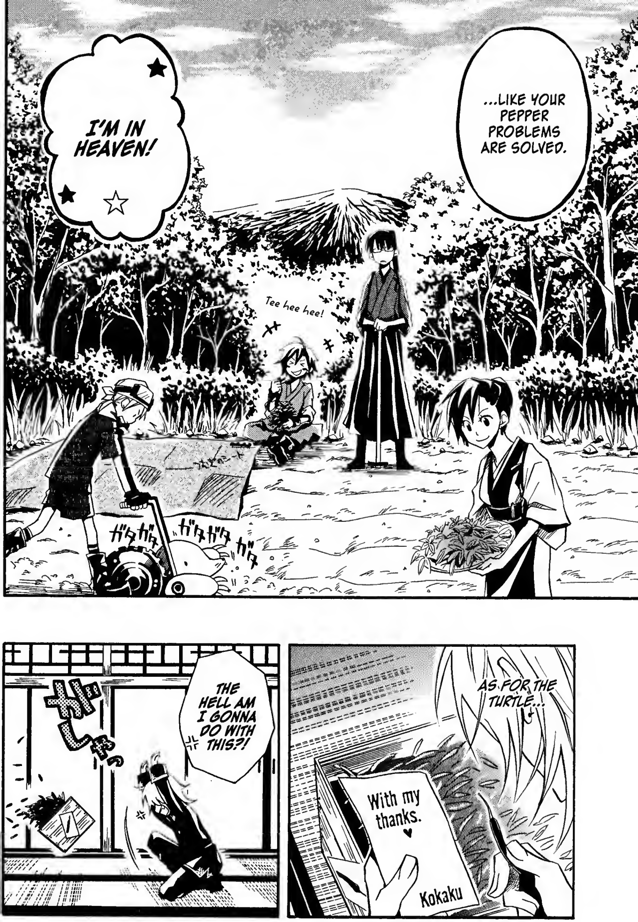

NGH...
KOKAKU!
GET UP!
CAN'T... Sick...
SICK?
ゴッ
LEAVE HIM ALONE. He won't die.
HE JUST NEEDS SOME QUIET TIME.
HOW CAN WE JUST LEAVE HIM...?
!
SIGH...


ゆらっ
H-HEY...
OKAY, THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM.
THEY'RE ALL YOURS.
THANKS.
YOU TOOK MY FIELDS AND RUINED MY PEPPERS.
YOU STOLE THE DEED AND PUT UP A SHACK.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
EEK!
びく
WH...
...WHO ARE YOU?!
ぐっ


WELL, I'M THE HERO, YA KNOW?
THE HANSHU'S ...!
THE DEED YOU STOLE. HAND IT OVER.

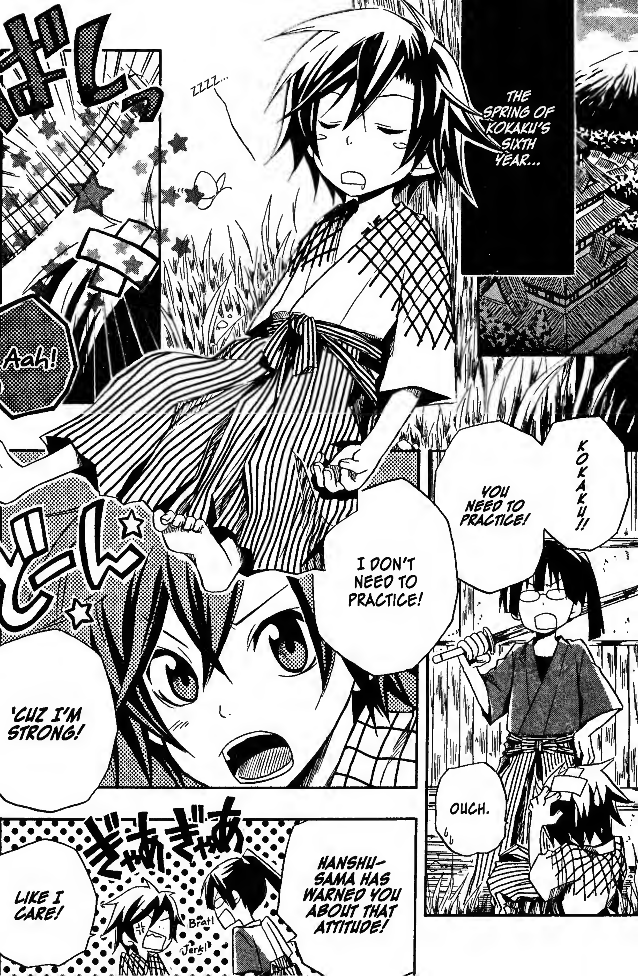

HEH.
DEED
HEH HEH HEH ...
BWA HA HA!
NOT SO HEROIC NOW, IS HE?
SCARY...
KAKU-CHAN...
にこにこ♪
ガタ ガタ ガタ

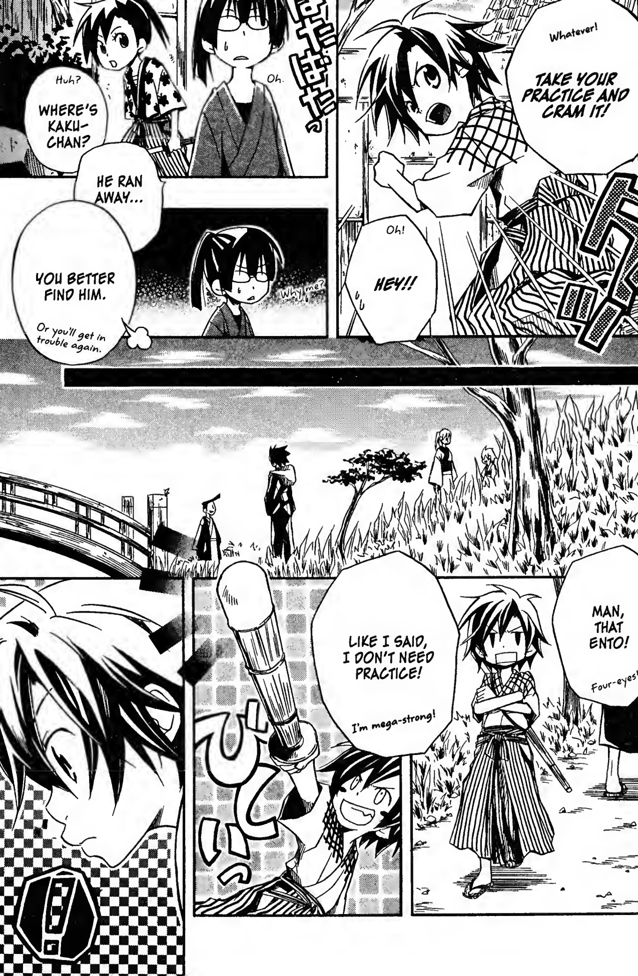

OKAY, THAT'S WEIRD. HOW CAN HE EAT THOSE AND JUST SMILE?
Wasn't he all out?
Hanshu-sama gave him some.
He's stupid, you know.
HEY!
DON'T TALK BAD ABOUT KAKU-CHAN!
I MEAN, HE FOILED THAT HORRIBLE MERCHANT'S EVIL PLAN, RIGHT?
HE'S A HERO THROUGH AND THROUGH! ♡
♥ He's so cute! ♥
....
Weird
HERE'S THE STUFF YOU WANTED.
Not sure it'll work.
It'll help 'em grow.
Cover it with this.
Whoa!
YOU REALLY DID IT? YOU'RE THE BEST!
You're Mr. Fixit!
Sigh...
IT SEEMS...

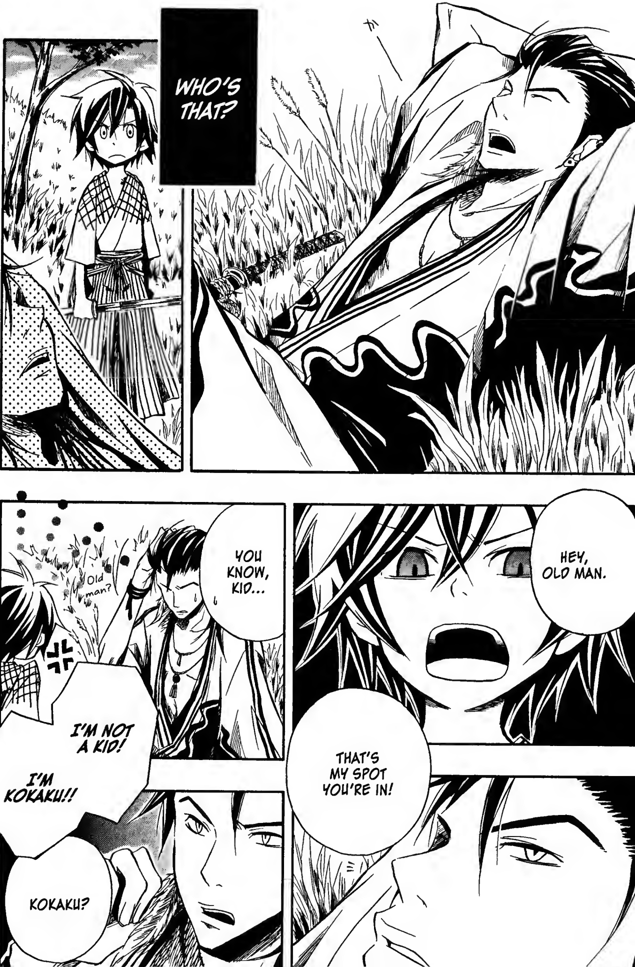

...LIKE YOUR PEPPER PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED.
I'M IN HEAVEN!
Tee hee hee!
ガタガタ
ガタガタ
ガタ
AS FOR THE TURTLE...
With my thanks. ♥
Kokaku
THE HELL AM I GONNA DO WITH THIS?!
がしゃっ

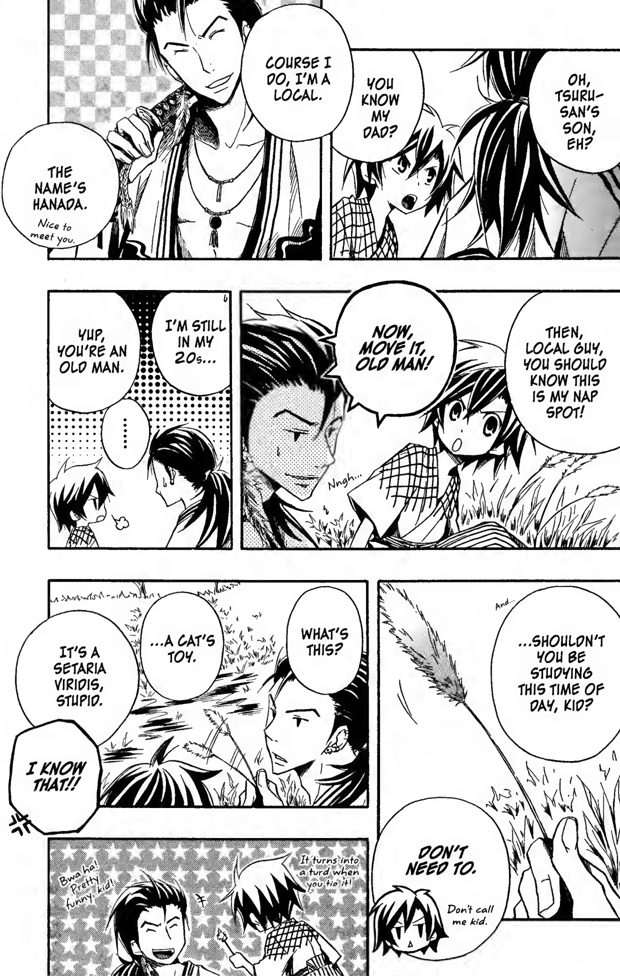
8TH SUBJECT: THE VOLUME OF THE BLACK CRANE/ THE END

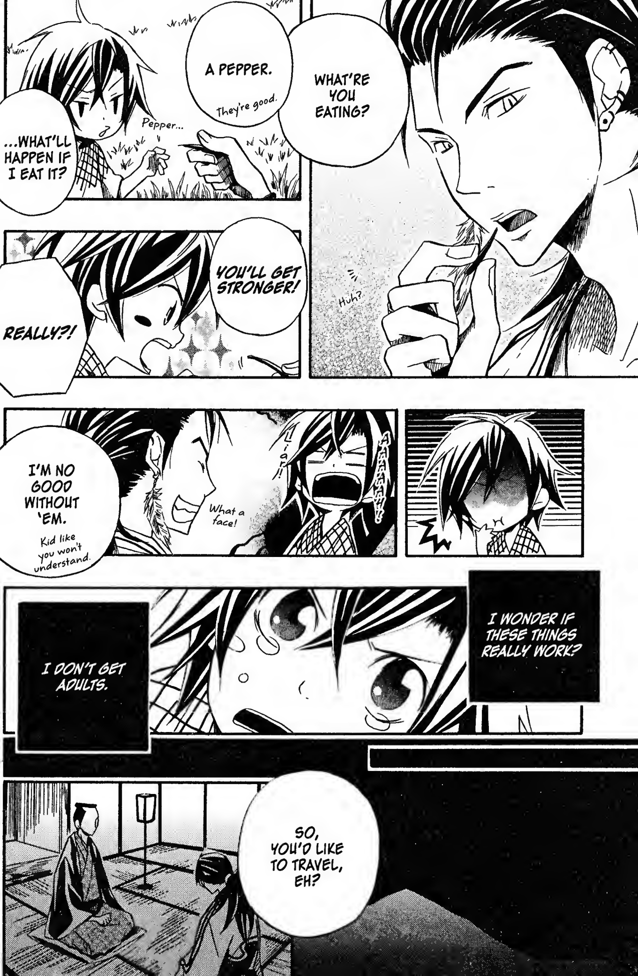
SIDE STORY:
THE VOLUME OF THE WISE CRANE

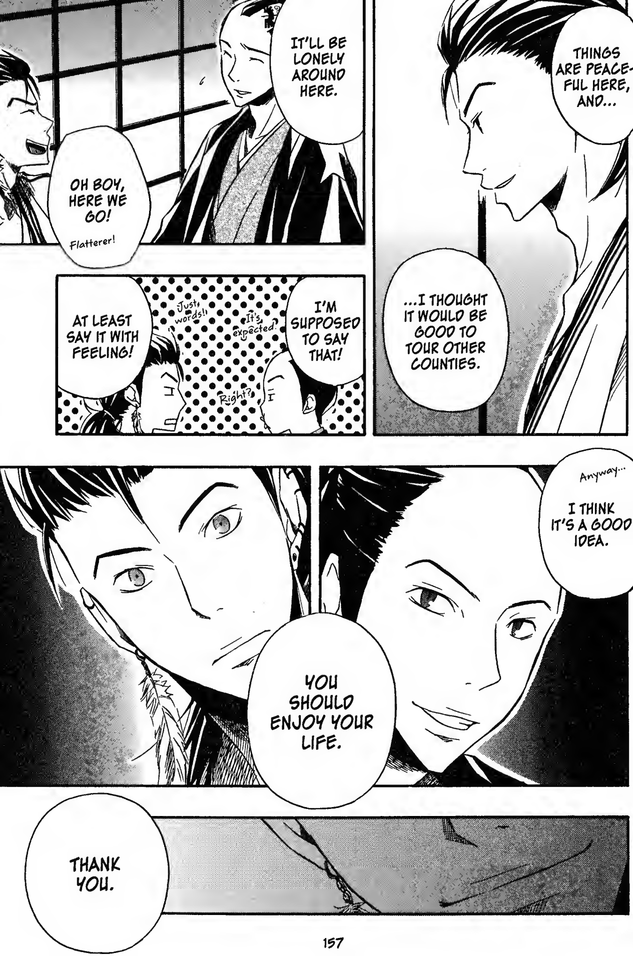

THE SPRING OF KOKAKU'S SIXTH YEAR...
ZZZZ...
ばしっ
Aah!
KOKAKU!!
YOU NEED TO PRACTICE!
OUCH.
I DON'T NEED TO PRACTICE!
どーん
'CUZ I'M STRONG!
ぎゃあぎゃあ
HANSHU-SAMA HAS WARNED YOU ABOUT THAT ATTITUDE!
LIKE I CARE!
Brat!
Jerk!

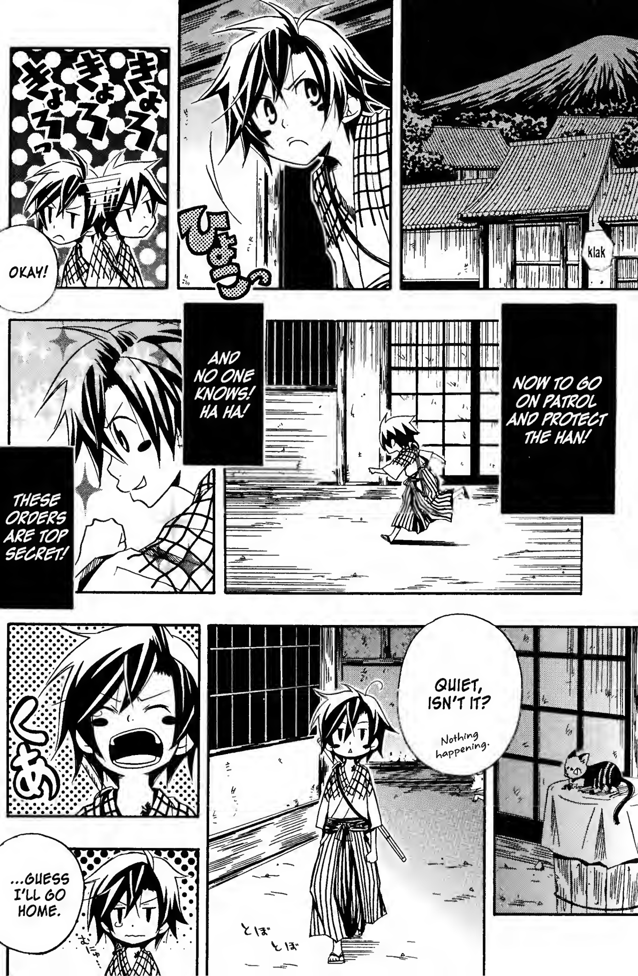

Whatever!
TAKE YOUR PRACTICE AND CRAM IT!
Oh!
HEY!!
ぱたぱたっ
Huh?
WHERE'S KAKU-CHAN?
Oh.
HE RAN AWAY...
YOU BETTER FIND HIM.
Or you'll get in trouble again.
Why me?
MAN, THAT ENTO!
Four-eyes!
LIKE I SAID, I DON'T NEED PRACTICE!
I'm mega-strong!
びしぃっ
!?

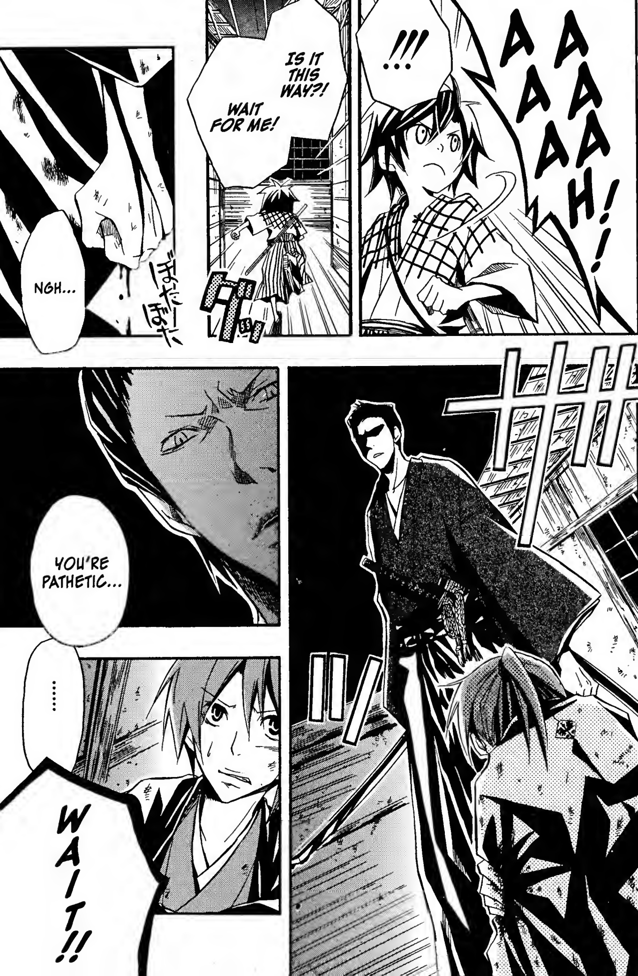

WHO'S THAT?
HEY, OLD MAN.
THAT'S MY SPOT YOU'RE IN!
YOU KNOW, KID...
Old man?
I'M NOT A KID!
I'M KOKAKU!!
KOKAKU?

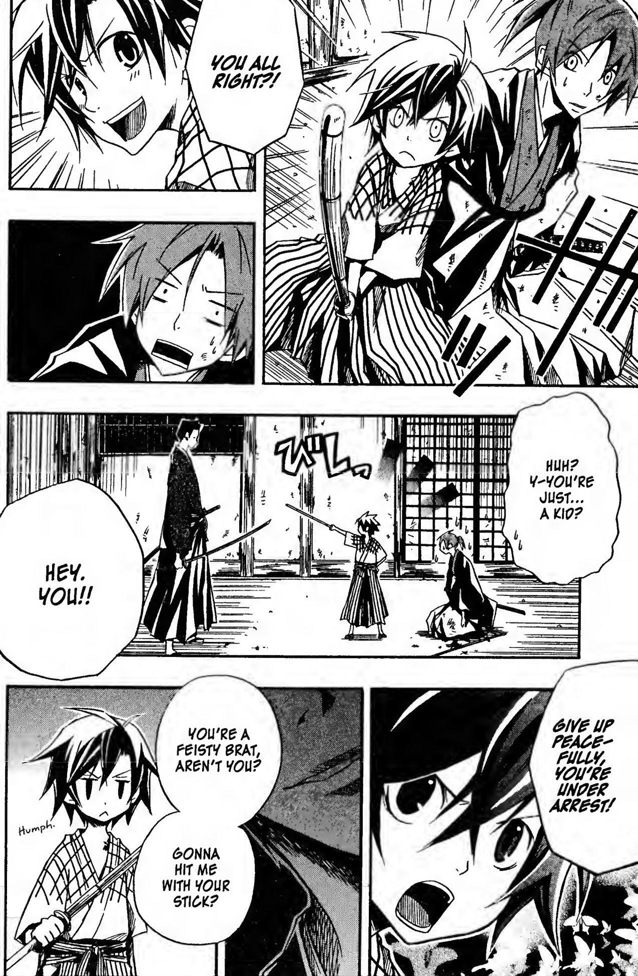

OH, TSURU-SAN'S SON, EH?
YOU KNOW MY DAD?
COURSE I DO, I'M A LOCAL.
THE NAME'S HANADA.
Nice to meet you.
THEN, LOCAL GUY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS IS MY NAP SPOT!
NOW, MOVE IT, OLD MAN!
Nngh...
I'M STILL IN MY 20s...
YUP, YOU'RE AN OLD MAN.
......
And...
...SHOULDN'T YOU BE STUDYING THIS TIME OF DAY, KID?
DON'T NEED TO.
Don't call me kid.
WHAT'S THIS?
...A CAT'S TOY.
IT'S A SETARIA VIRIDIS, STUPID.
I KNOW THAT!!
It turns into a turd when you tie it!
Bwa ha! Pretty funny, kid!

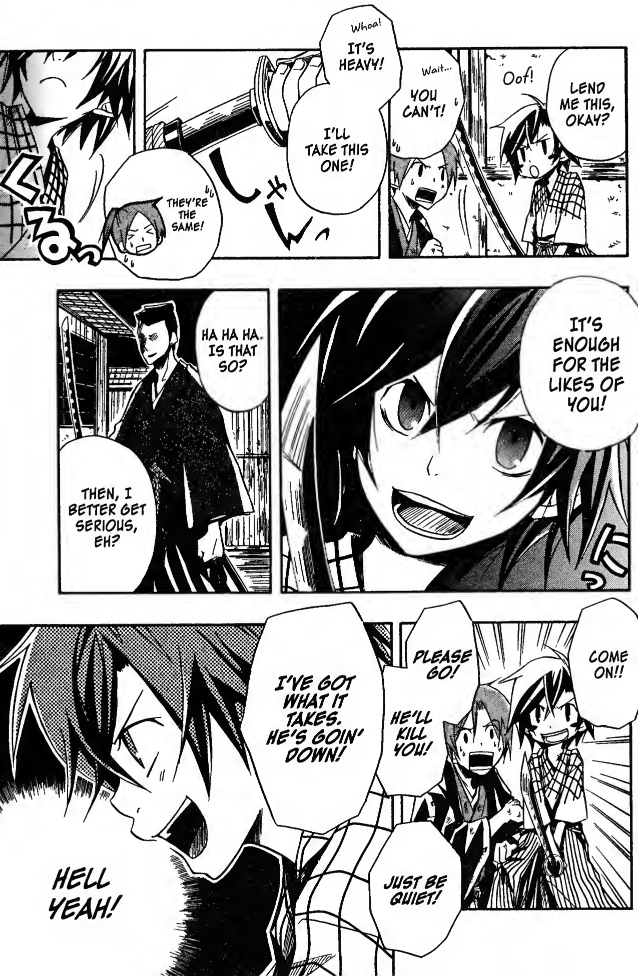

WHAT'RE YOU EATING?
A PEPPER.
They're good.
Pepper...
...WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF I EAT IT?
Huh?
YOU'LL GET STRONGER!
REALLY?!
AAAAAAAH!!
Li-ar!!
What a face!
I'M NO GOOD WITHOUT 'EM.
Kid like you won't understand.
I WONDER IF THESE THINGS REALLY WORK?
I DON'T GET ADULTS.
SO, YOU'D LIKE TO TRAVEL, EH?

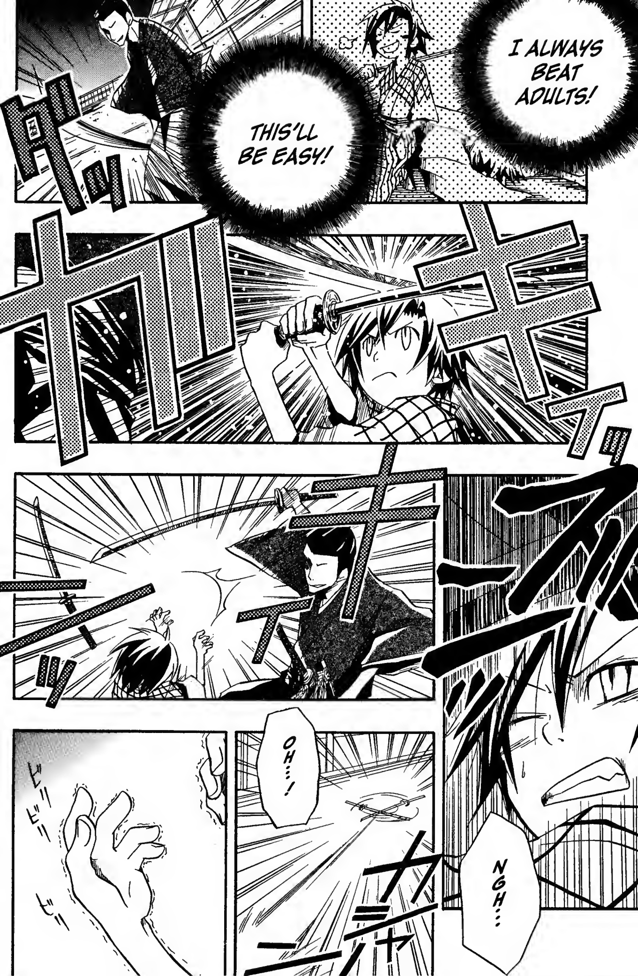

THINGS ARE PEACEFUL HERE, AND...
...I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD TO TOUR OTHER COUNTIES.
IT'LL BE LONELY AROUND HERE.
OH BOY, HERE WE GO!
Flatterer!
I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY THAT!
It's expected!
Just words!!
AT LEAST SAY IT WITH FEELING!
Right?
Anyway...
I THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA.
YOU SHOULD ENJOY YOUR LIFE.
THANK YOU.

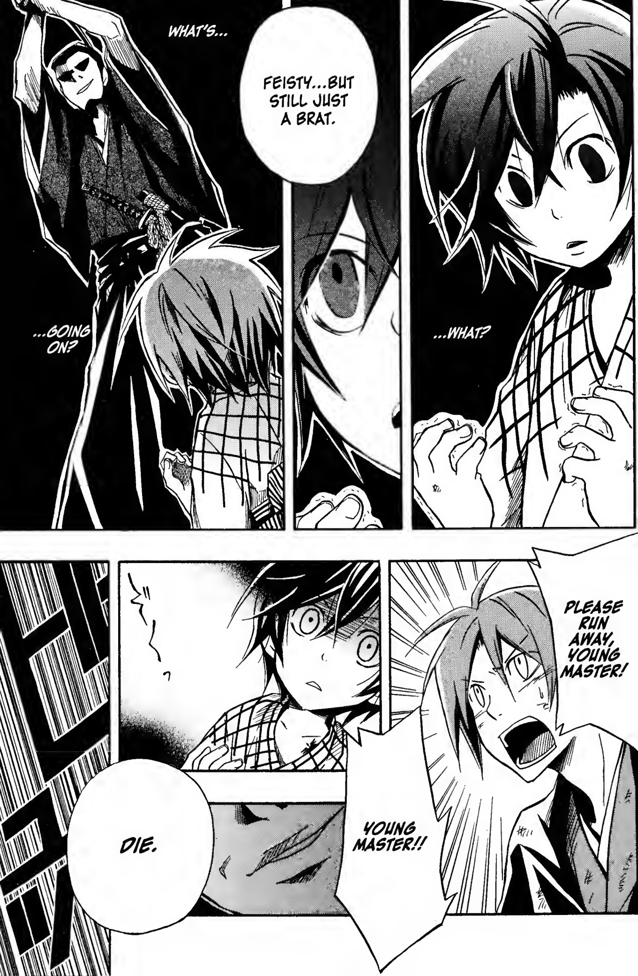

klak
ひょっ
きょろ きょろ きょろっ
OKAY!
NOW TO GO ON PATROL AND PROTECT THE HAN!
AND NO ONE KNOWS! HA HA!
THESE ORDERS ARE TOP SECRET!
QUIET, ISN'T IT?
Nothing happening.
とぼ とぼ
くあ
...GUESS I'LL GO HOME.
むにゅ…

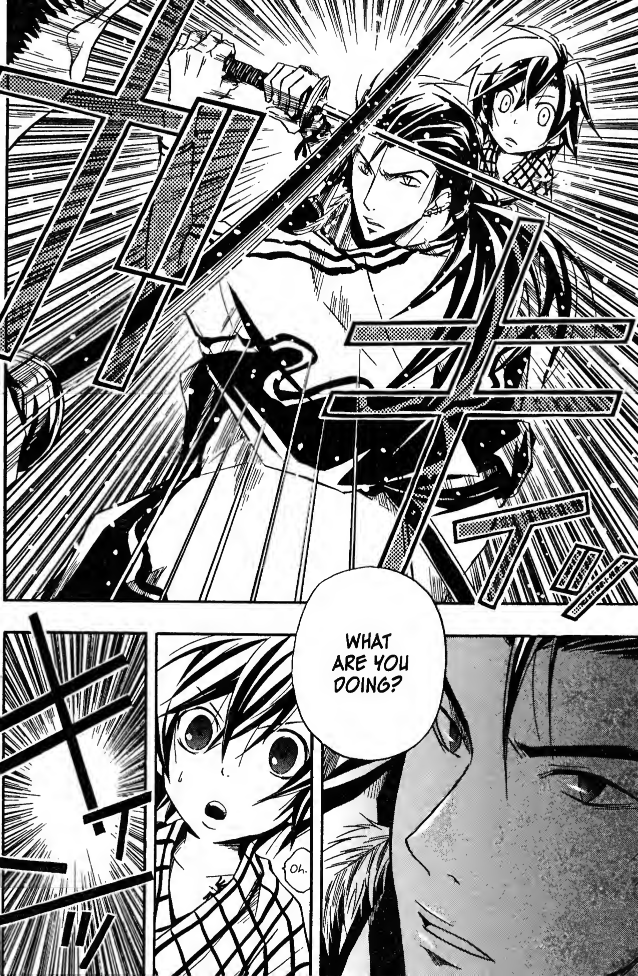

AAAAAH!!
!!!
IS IT THIS WAY?!
WAIT FOR ME!
ダッ
ぼた ぼた
NGH...
YOU'RE PATHETIC...
......
WAIT!!

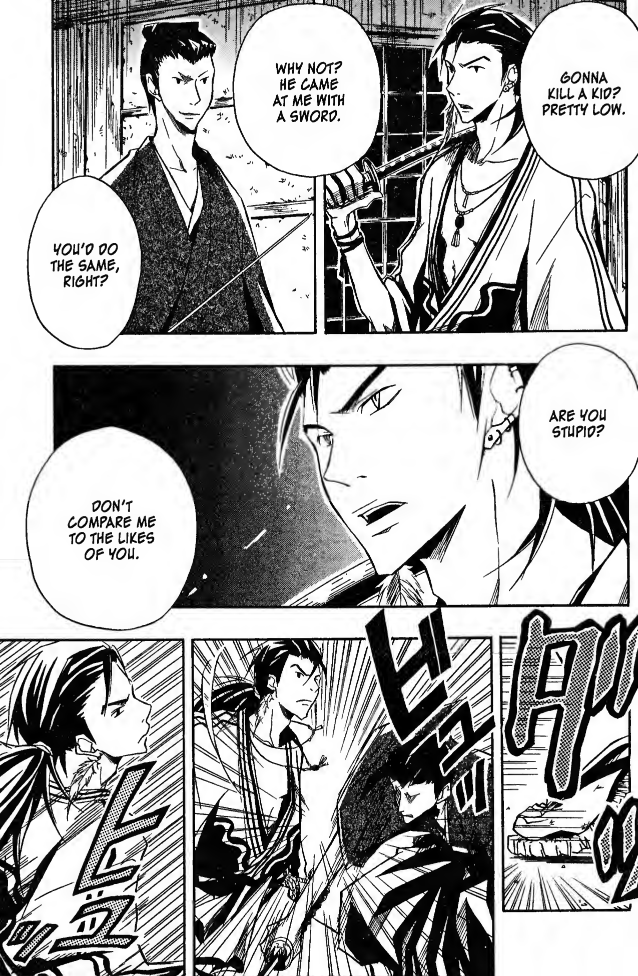

YOU ALL RIGHT?!
HUH? Y-YOU'RE JUST... A KID?
びしっ
HEY. YOU!!
GIVE UP PEACEFULLY, YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
YOU'RE A FEISTY BRAT, AREN'T YOU?
GONNA HIT ME WITH YOUR STICK?
Humph.

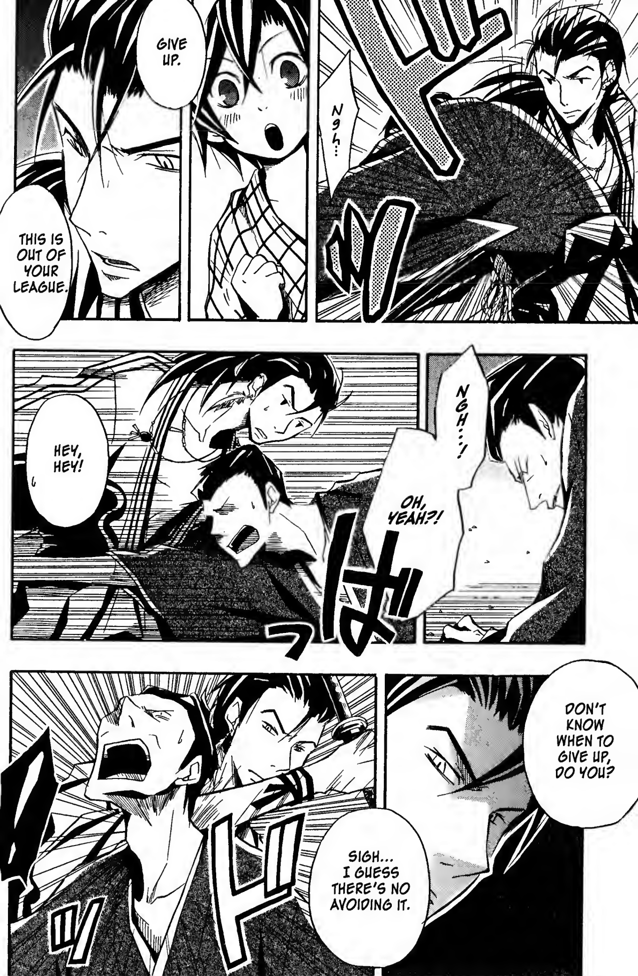

LEND ME THIS, OKAY?
Oof!
Wait... YOU CAN'T!
Whoa! IT'S HEAVY!
I'LL TAKE THIS ONE!
しゃん
THEY'RE THE SAME!
くるっ
IT'S ENOUGH FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!
にっ
HA HA HA. IS THAT SO?
THEN, I BETTER GET SERIOUS, EH?
COME ON!!
PLEASE GO!
HE'LL KILL YOU!
JUST BE QUIET!
I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES. HE'S GOIN' DOWN!
HELL YEAH!

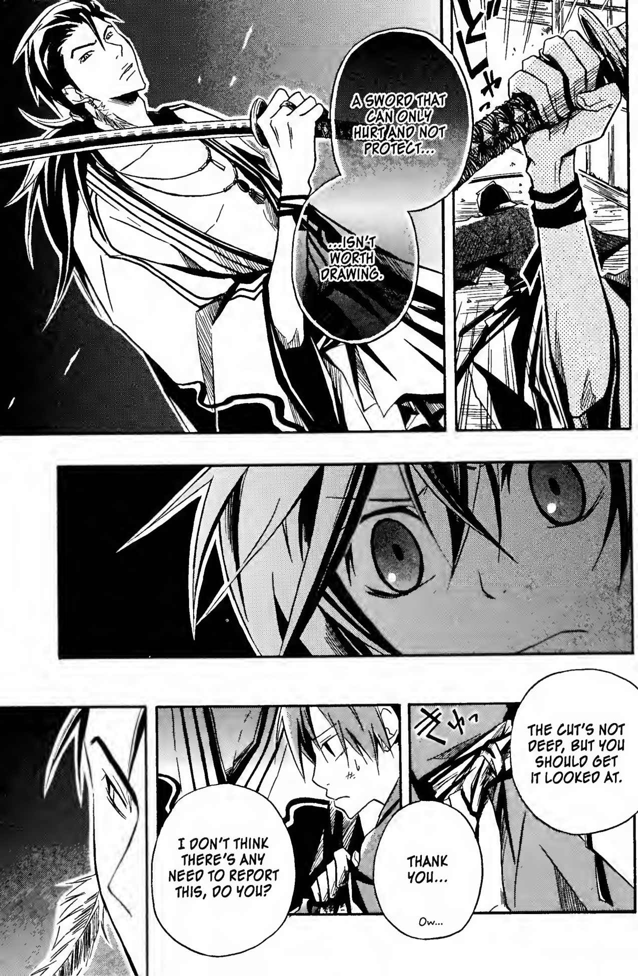

I ALWAYS BEAT ADULTS!
THIS'LL BE EASY!
NGH...
OH...!

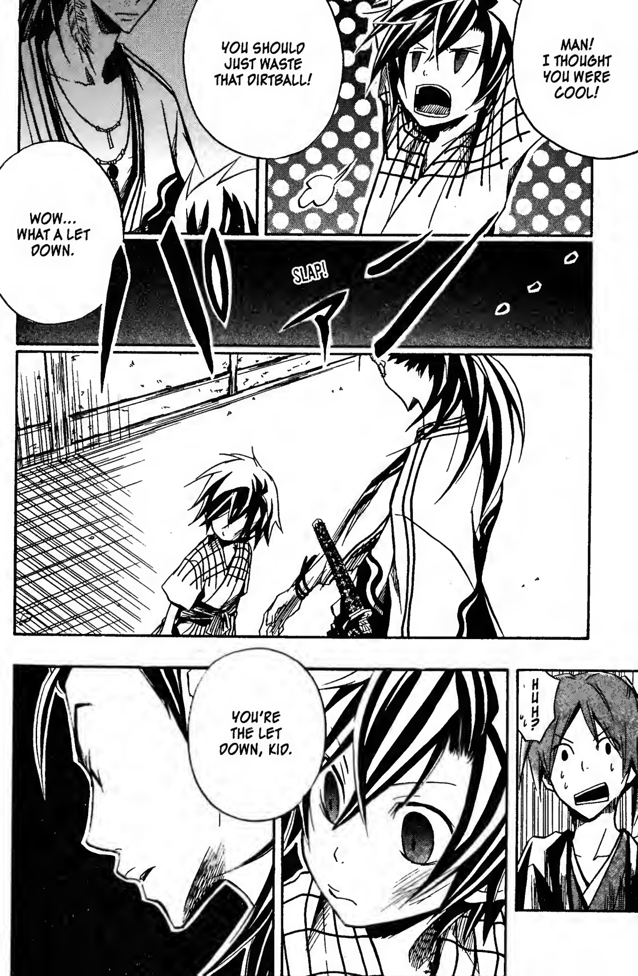

...WHAT?
FEISTY...BUT STILL JUST A BRAT.
WHAT'S...
...GOING ON?
PLEASE RUN AWAY, YOUNG MASTER!
YOUNG MASTER!!
DIE.

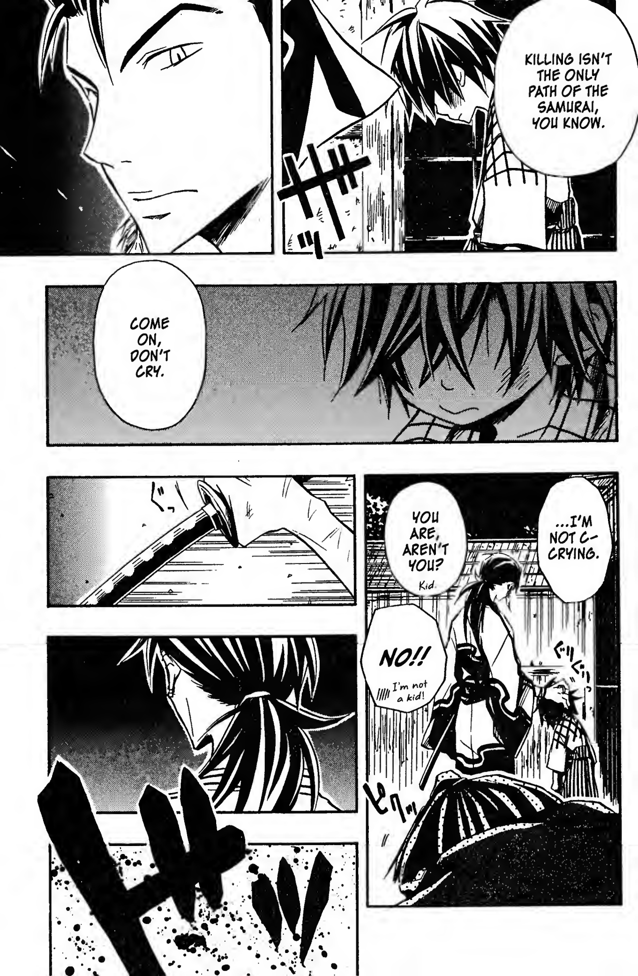

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
Oh.

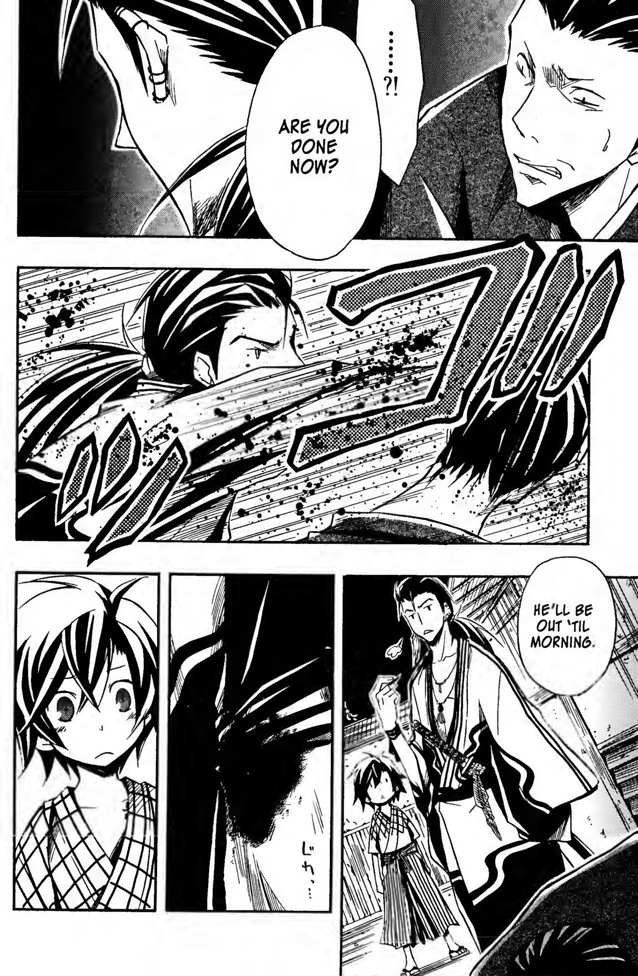

GONNA KILL A KID? PRETTY LOW.
WHY NOT? HE CAME AT ME WITH A SWORD.
YOU'D DO THE SAME, RIGHT?
ARE YOU STUPID?
DON'T COMPARE ME TO THE LIKES OF YOU.
ダッ
ビュッ
ビュッ

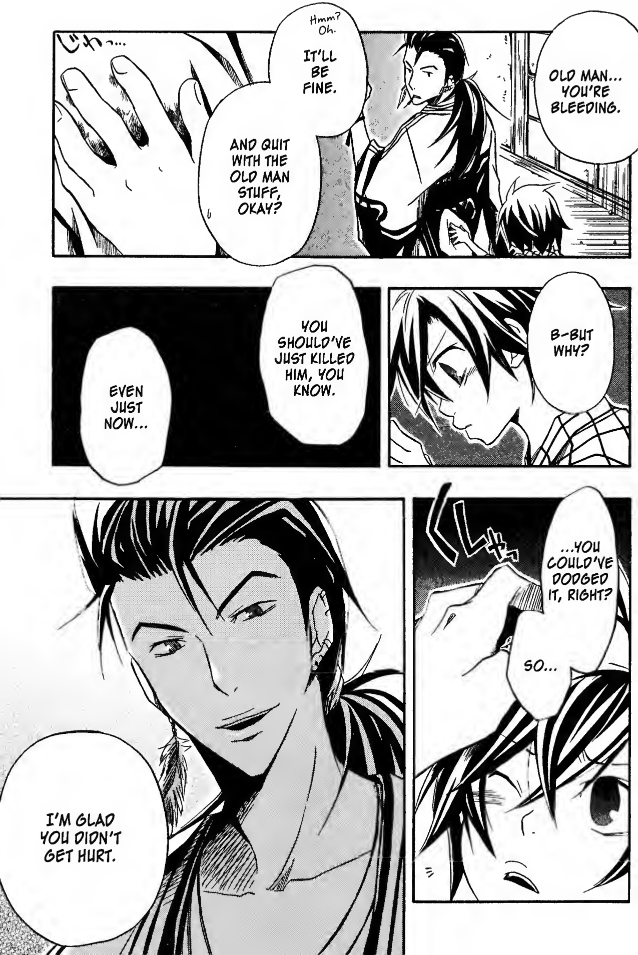

Ngh...
GIVE UP.
THIS IS OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE.
NGH...!
OH, YEAH?!
HEY, HEY!
ばっ
DON'T KNOW WHEN TO GIVE UP, DO YOU?
SIGH... I GUESS THERE'S NO AVOIDING IT.
ドッ

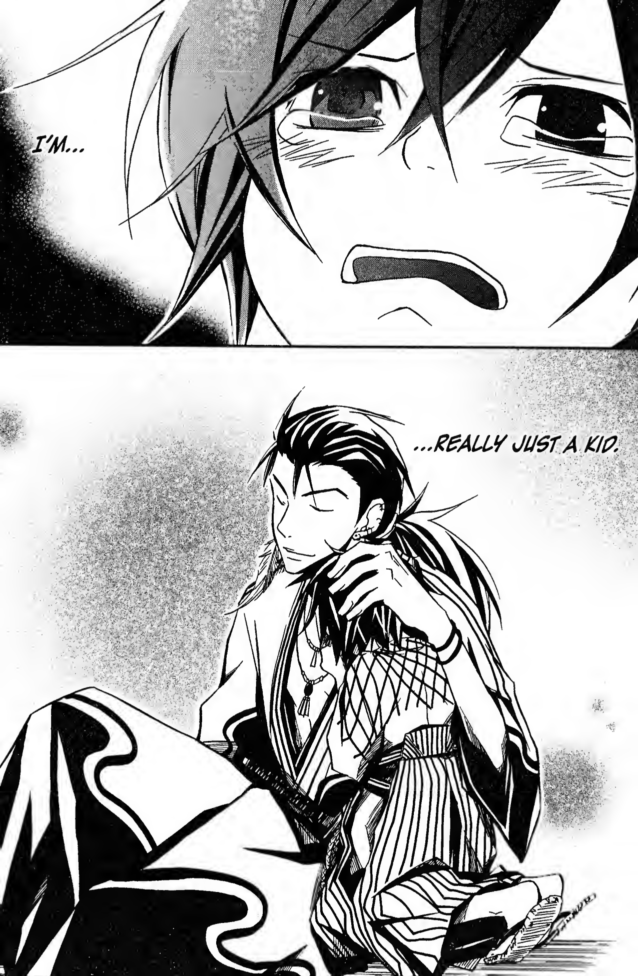

A SWORD THAT CAN ONLY HURT AND NOT PROTECT...
...ISN'T WORTH DRAWING.
きゅっ
THE CUT'S NOT DEEP, BUT YOU SHOULD GET IT LOOKED AT.
THANK YOU...
Ow...
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY NEED TO REPORT THIS, DO YOU?

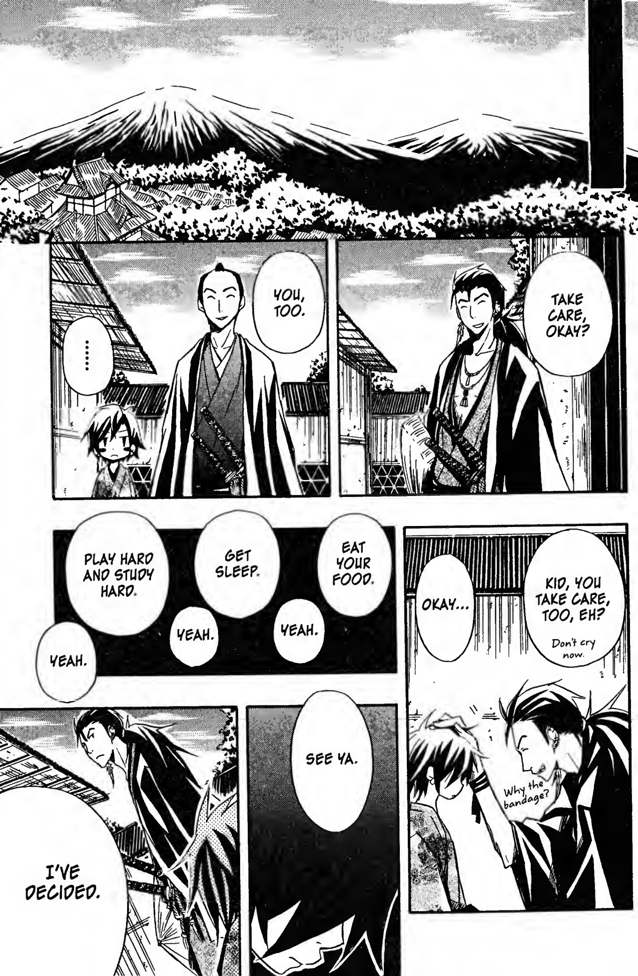

MAN! I THOUGHT YOU WERE COOL!
YOU SHOULD JUST WASTE THAT DIRTBALL!
WOW... WHAT A LET DOWN.
SLAP!
HUH?
YOU'RE THE LET DOWN, KID.

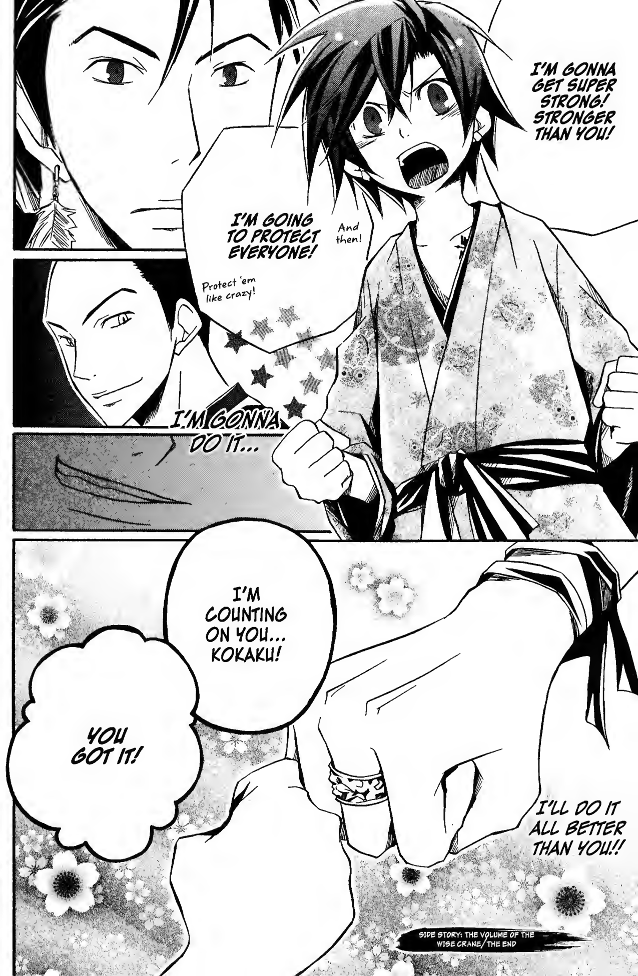

KILLING ISN'T THE ONLY PATH OF THE SAMURAI, YOU KNOW.
COME ON, DON'T CRY.
...I'M NOT C-CRYING.
YOU ARE, AREN'T YOU?
Kid.
NO!!
I'm not a kid!
ぐりぐりっ
ピクッ

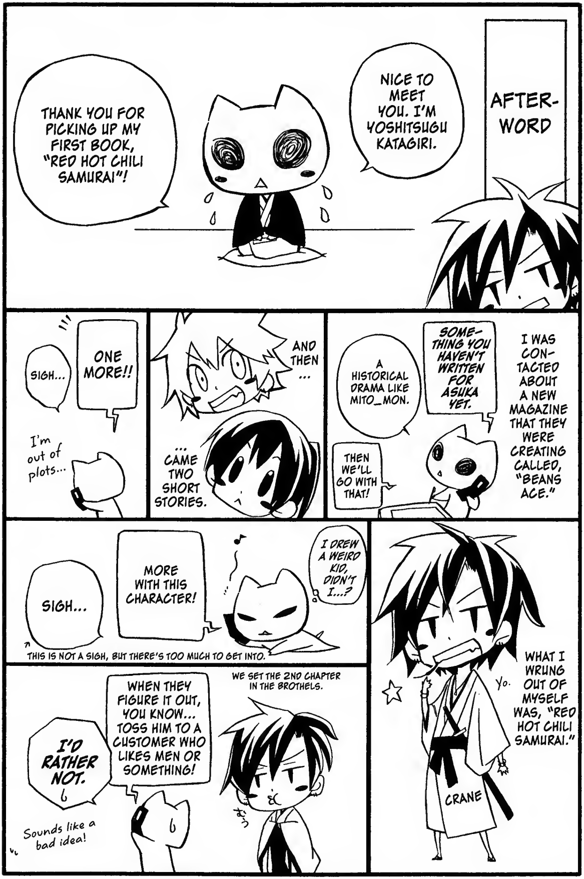

……?!
ARE YOU DONE NOW?
HE'LL BE OUT 'TIL MORNING.
じわ…

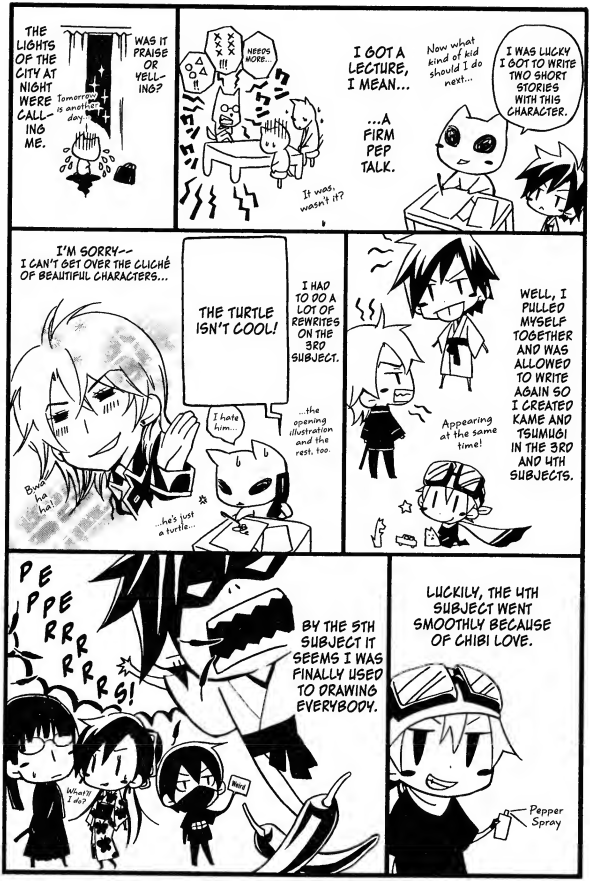

OLD MAN... YOU'RE BLEEDING.
Hmm? Oh.
IT'LL BE FINE.
AND QUIT WITH THE OLD MAN STUFF, OKAY?
じわ…
B-BUT WHY?
YOU SHOULD'VE JUST KILLED HIM, YOU KNOW.
EVEN JUST NOW...
くしゃ
...YOU COULD'VE DODGED IT, RIGHT?
SO...
I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T GET HURT.


I'M...
...REALLY JUST A KID.


TAKE CARE, OKAY?
YOU, TOO.
……
KID, YOU TAKE CARE, TOO, EH?
Don't cry now.
OKAY...
Why the bandage?
EAT YOUR FOOD.
YEAH.
GET SLEEP.
YEAH.
PLAY HARD AND STUDY HARD.
YEAH.
SEE YA.
I'VE DECIDED.


I'M GONNA GET SUPER STRONG! STRONGER THAN YOU!
And then!
I'M GOING TO PROTECT EVERYONE!
Protect 'em like crazy!
I'M GONNA DO IT...
I'LL DO IT ALL BETTER THAN YOU!!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU... KOKAKU!
YOU GOT IT!
SIDE STORY: THE VOLUME OF THE WISE CRANE/THE END


AFTER-WORD
NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M YOSHITSUGU KATAGIRI.
THANK YOU FOR PICKING UP MY FIRST BOOK, "RED HOT CHILI SAMURAI"!
I WAS CONTACTED ABOUT A NEW MAGAZINE THAT THEY WERE CREATING CALLED, "BEANS ACE."
SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T WRITTEN FOR ASUKA YET.
A HISTORICAL DRAMA LIKE MITO_MON.
THEN WE'LL GO WITH THAT!
AND THEN ...
... CAME TWO SHORT STORIES.
ONE MORE!!
SIGH...
I'm out of plots...
WHAT I WRUNG OUT OF MYSELF WAS, "RED HOT CHILI SAMURAI."
Yo.
CRANE
I DREW A WEIRD KID, DIDN'T I...?
MORE WITH THIS CHARACTER!
SIGH...
THIS IS NOT A SIGH, BUT THERE'S TOO MUCH TO GET INTO.
WE SET THE 2ND CHAPTER IN THE BROTHELS.
WHEN THEY FIGURE IT OUT, YOU KNOW... TOSS HIM TO A CUSTOMER WHO LIKES MEN OR SOMETHING!
I'D RATHER NOT.
Sounds like a bad idea!

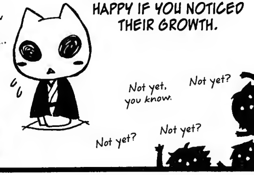

I WAS LUCKY I GOT TO WRITE TWO SHORT STORIES WITH THIS CHARACTER.
Now what kind of kid should I do next...
I GOT A LECTURE, I MEAN...
...A FIRM PEP TALK.
NEEDS MORE...
×× ×× ×× !!!
○△ ○△ !!
It was, wasn't it?
THE LIGHTS OF THE CITY AT NIGHT WERE CALLING ME.
WAS IT PRAISE OR YELLING?
Tomorrow is another day...
WELL, I PULLED MYSELF TOGETHER AND WAS ALLOWED TO WRITE AGAIN SO I CREATED KAME AND TSUMUGI IN THE 3RD AND 4TH SUBJECTS.
Appearing at the same time!
I HAD TO DO A LOT OF REWRITES ON THE 3RD SUBJECT.
THE TURTLE ISN'T COOL!
...the opening illustration and the rest, too.
I hate him...
...he's just a turtle...
I'M SORRY-- I CAN'T GET OVER THE CLICHÉ OF BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERS...
Bwa ha ha!
LUCKILY, THE 4TH SUBJECT WENT SMOOTHLY BECAUSE OF CHIBI LOVE.
Pepper Spray
BY THE 5TH SUBJECT IT SEEMS I WAS FINALLY USED TO DRAWING EVERYBODY.
PEPPERRRRRRRS!
What'll I do?
Weird

See ya later.

THE NEW STORY WRITTEN JUST FOR THIS BOOK CAME ABOUT BECAUSE OF A SUGGESTION FROM MY EDITOR. IT WAS FUN DRAWING A CHIBI CRANE, BUT HANADA-SAN WAS...IN A SENSE IT WAS FUN, BUT I DON'T WANT HIM APPEARING IN THE MAIN STORY...

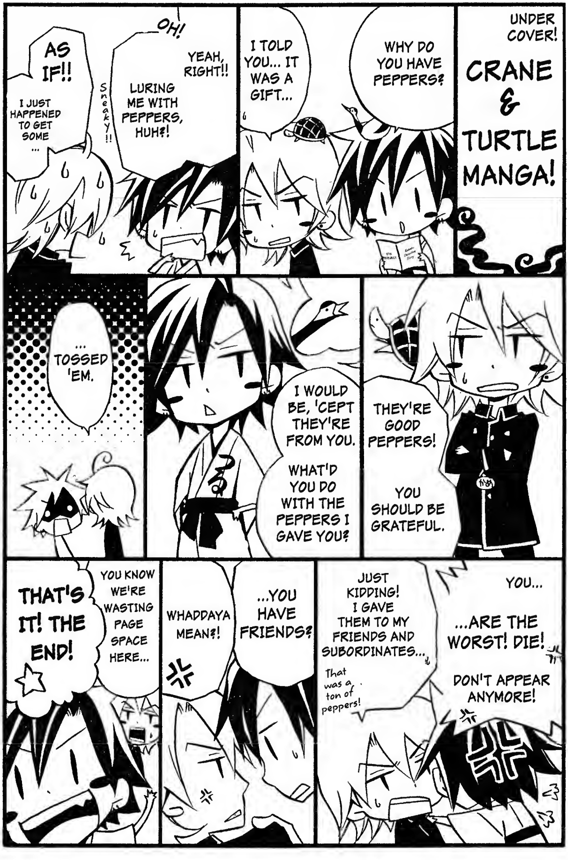
...for a lot of reasons.
Take this!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN OR WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE WILL APPEAR FROM NOW ON, BUT IT'D MAKE ME HAPPY IF YOU NOTICED THEIR GROWTH.


I'd like to grow each time I write this, too...
Not yet, you know.
Not yet?
Not yet?
Not yet?

BEGINNING WITH YOSHIKAZU-SAN AND HIS SISTER WHO ALWAYS HELP ME WITH CREATING CHARACTERS (DELUSIONS?) AND EVEN HELP ME GATHER REFERENCE MATERIALS, KOMATSU-SAN WHO HYPES THINGS UP WITH SITE RELATED THINGS, AND M_SHITA-SAN, MY EDITOR, WHO SUGGESTS A LOT OF THINGS; THE PEOPLE OF ASUKA'S EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT, MY FAMILY WHO SUPPORTS ME, THE PEOPLE WHO'VE CHEERED ME ON SINCE MY DEBUT AND THE PEOPLE WHO'VE ENCOUNTERED THIS WORK FOR THE FIRST TIME, ETC.!

I REALLY THANK YOU VERY MUCH!! BEST REGARDS HERE, TOO!


UNDER COVER!
CRANE & TURTLE MANGA!
WHY DO YOU HAVE PEPPERS?
I TOLD YOU... IT WAS A GIFT...
OH!
YEAH, RIGHT!!
LURING ME WITH PEPPERS, HUH?!
Sneaky!!
AS IF!!
I JUST HAPPENED TO GET SOME ...
THEY'RE GOOD PEPPERS!
YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL.
I WOULD BE, 'CEPT THEY'RE FROM YOU.
WHAT'D YOU DO WITH THE PEPPERS I GAVE YOU?
... TOSSED 'EM.
YOU...
...ARE THE WORST! DIE!
DON'T APPEAR ANYMORE!
JUST KIDDING! I GAVE THEM TO MY FRIENDS AND SUBORDINATES...
That was a ton of peppers!
...YOU HAVE FRIENDS?
WHADDAYA MEAN?!
YOU KNOW WE'RE WASTING PAGE SPACE HERE...
THAT'S IT! THE END!